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TOAST OF WASHINGTON D.C. Leaders of the Filipino community ask for the autograph of President Arroyo during the dinner meeting hosted by the Arroyo-allied FILUSA (Filipino-USA) at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel in Washington D.C. Organized by a presidential adviser from Pampanga, FILUSA members, mostly Kapampangans, chant: "G-M-A all the way." JOHN BAZUNO

At last, GMA meets Obama

'No one in RP has been prayed for as much as Cory'

By Fe Zamora, Tina G. Santos and Allison W. Lopez

"NO ONE IN THIS COUNTRY has ever been prayed for to live long as much as former President Corazon Aquino," said Fr Jerry Orbos in his homily at the Mass he officiated at the Manila City Hall at noon yesterday.

At Edsa Shrine, Bishop Teodoro Bacani said last night during Mass to start a 40-hour vigil for the ailing democracy icon that Aquino's legacy is that she showed us a leader who did not know how to "cheat, lie or steal."

"Wala nga syang alam (She didn't really know)," Bacani said, after recalling Aquino's response to the 1986 snap presidential election when then dictator Ferdinand Marcos said that his challenger could not be president because she was just a

NO END: A10

CHR: Melissa trip to camp inconclusive

By Nikko Dizon and Dona Pazzibugan

PORT MAGSAYSAY, NUEVA ECIJA—Dressed in a black blouse, her face hidden by her long hair, a cap and a big pair of shades, Filipino-American activist Melissa Roxas had to be prodded to step into the guard barracks of a military facility yesterday in Nueva Ecija.

The barracks of the 7th Military Intelligence Battalion of the Army's 7th Infantry Division headquartered at Fort Magsaysay was being checked by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) as possibly the place where Roxas said she was held captive and tortured by men she believed to be soldiers.

CHR PROBES: A10

Newspaper readership on the rise

By Abigail L. Ho

DOOMSAYERS BETTER THINK twice before predicting the death of the newspaper industry.

Newspapers are alive and kicking and continue to be the preferred advertising source of consumers, particularly those in the higher income strata, global market research firm Synovate says. (See related story in Business, Page B8.)

NEWSPAPERS: A8

SAILORS AHOY Armada de Republica de Colombia (ARC) Gloria, Colombia's only naval training ship, is now docked at Pier 13, South Harbor, Port Area. Of its 176 crew, 120 are cadets. And they are standing on ropes all the way up close to scraping the sky. Now on its 63rd cruise, ARC Gloria promotes international ties between Colombia and other countries. Free tours on Aug. 1 (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) and Aug. 2 (10 a.m.-1p.m.) include the viewing of pre-Colombian gold and ceramic artifacts. JOVEN CANLAS

Enrile: Erap mobbed everywhere

By Christine O. Avendaño

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH "Erap" Estrada is being mobbed everywhere he goes and can easily outdraw any other presidential aspirant anywhere.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, who had been in a number of places Estrada visited recently ostensibly to thank his unwavering supporters, is putting a bet on this.

"You want to test this? Put Erap up in any venue here in Metro Manila and put any of those candidates in other venues, we'll see where the crowd will go," Enrile said in a meeting Wednesday night with Ilocanos

ENRILE: A4

JPE on Cha-cha: No way before 2010 polls

By Michael Lim Ubac

CHARTER CHANGE BEFORE next year's elections?

"No way!" said Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile.

"I'm almost certain it will not happen before 2010. Maybe it will happen after that," Enrile said at a dinner with business editors and reporters on Wednesday.

Enrile said he was supporting moves to amend the Constitution through a constitutional convention after next year's balloting. He said he was open to proposals to adopt the parliamentary system, but warned it has "its own weaknesses also if you will not put safeguards."

Enrile cited lack of time and widespread opposition to the move initiated by allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo to the House of Representatives in June by passing by voice vote

JPE ON CHA-CHA: A6

A meeting of firsts at the White House

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WASHINGTON (VIA PLDT)—THE MEETING that was to take place at the White House between 2 and 3 a.m. today (Philippine time) was a meeting of firsts.

For President Macapagal-Arroyo's own announcements, security, economy and the environment were to be the main issues for discussion at her meeting with US President Barack Obama.

"My expectations for the trip are straightforward: To meet the new US President and advance the interests of the Philippines with our strongest friend and ally. The US is essential to our economic, diplomatic and national security. We plan to ensure that these objectives remain front and center and on track between our two nations," the first Southeast Asian President to meet with the United States' first black President told members of a Filipino-American group in Washington.

But was Ms Arroyo invited by Obama to the meeting at the Oval Office, as Malacañang has constantly claimed?

Not even the senior official of the US State Department who briefed the members of the Philippine media four hours before Ms Arroyo's arrival in Washington knew for sure.

"There was an opportunity for her to come to Washington. A visit was proposed, and the timing worked for both Presidents and they were happy to meet," said the official who declined to be named.

The official also said it was not as if Obama had chosen Ms Arroyo over other leaders of the

AT LAST: A10

All Lito Lapid wants is photo op with Obama

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WASHINGTON (VIA PLDT)—HASN'T Sen. Lito Lapid heard of the wonders of Photoshop?

That was the reaction of one Twitter user yesterday after the Inquirer noticed the news that the senator from Pampanga was itching to be included in a select group of Filipino officials, led by President Macapagal-Arroyo, who were to meet US President Barack Obama at

ALL LITO LAPID: A10

GMA party braces for US protests

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WASHINGTON (VIA PLDT)—A travel weary President Macapagal-Arroyo frolicked in the company of nearly 800 Filipino-American supporters, mostly her kababayan (provincemates), at a hotel dinner party here ahead of her meeting with US President Barack Obama.

"G-M-A, all the way," chanted members of the event host, FIL-USA, which was formed a few months ago by former As-

GMA PARTY: A10

WHAT'S INSIDE
BUSINESS / B1
Meralco stock dives on fear of SEC probe
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Home along the bay: Dolphy and Zsazsa built home filled with memories, music and laughter
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Who wore what at the Sona
LIFESTYLE / F1
Rare visit to Louis Vuitton home/museum

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/49 Draw: 29 15 EZ2* 2 15 (*[in no order])

SUERTRES* 6 0 6 | 2 7 2 | 0 4 4 (6/58 draw)

SIX DIGIT* 6 1 1 | SUPERLOTTO 6/49 6 1 7 | 15 25 38 40 42 49 P25,299,241.20

SC justices raise automation doubts

By Norman Bordadora

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES have expressed some doubt about the reliability of the automated election system that a foreign company would be supplying for the 2010 first-ever computerized election in the country.

In a nine-and-a-half-hour long hearing that lasted until almost midnight on Wednesday, the justices questioned the track record of Smartmatic, the foreign partner in the Smartmatic-TIM consortium that won the P7.2-billion poll automation contract with the Commission on Elections.

They also questioned the reliability of the Smartmatic machines in the absence of a pilot test in actual elections and in light of an adverse comment from the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, which concurring as serious caveat (friend of the court).

The court en banc was hearing a petition from the Concerned Citizens Movement to stop the implementation of the P7.2-billion contract because of the alleged lack of pilot testing, the lack of a common interface between the consortium's two member firms and a lack of compliance with automation standards.

No TRO

Chief Justice Reynato Puno gave the parties 15 days to file their memorandums on the case after which the petition would be deemed submitted for resolution.

The high court was also urged to issue a temporary restraining order or a stay order on the payment of the contract but still COM's petition for oral arguments on Wednesday.

Senior Associate Justice Leonardo Quisumbing asked the Comelec's lawyer to submit an explanation on the allegations of bribes and even fraud against the Smartmatic's election system used in Venezuela and parts of the United States.

Quisumbing cited an article by the "Real Clear Politics" publication published by the UBS that showed the role of Smartmatic's

SMARTMATIC COUNTING MACHINE

automated election system in the overall reelection win by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in 2004.

He said that an exit poll conducted by the New York-based Mitofsky International showed that more than 59 percent of Venezuelans surveyed by Mitofsky International gave Chavez low marks on the automated election system.

Quisumbing also cited a Zogby International survey that showed Chavez losing 59 percent to 41 percent. Official tallies using Smartmatic machines, however, showed Chavez won, 58 percent to 42.

Venezuela experience

The Office of the Solicitor General, which is representing the Comelec, had presented Smartmatic's experience in Venezuela as an indication that the firm could handle the Philippines' national and local elections next year.

Deputy Solicitor General Teresa Laroya explained that the Smartmatic experience in Venezuela was brought up only to show that the firm had already undertaken at least 50 percent of a country's electoral process at the national level.

Still citing the arguments of the 1986 a group of computer experts that questioned and succeeded in having the Supreme Court nullify the P1.54-billion Mega Pacific deal in 2004, Quisumbing also asked all legal delays and irregularities in the elections in Chicago that used Smartmatic machines.

Smartmatic partnered with the Filipino firm Total Information Management (TIM) to form the consortium that will provide the automated system in the 2010 elections.

Aside from requiring COM, Comelec and Smartmatic to appear, the Supreme Court also summoned IT groups like the ITPE the University of the Philippines Computer Center and the National Computer Center to comment on the reliability and accuracy of the Smartmatic's precinct count optical system.

Associate Justice Antonio Carpio raised the specter of the machines getting hacked because of Smartmatic's use of "non-memory cards instead of embedded data cards for the precinct data.

"When if the memory card is hacked into and is programmed [to such a way] that after a candidate receives 10 votes, the 10 votes are taken away and given to the other candidates?" Carpio said.

Smartmatic lawyer Virter Lanzin said the count the system cannot be hacked and that the cards themselves have been removed from hackers through encryption.

Carpio was unimpressed, saying it would only better hackers to break the memory card security.

One question referendum

Carpio also questioned Smartmatic's experience in national electoral exercises, saying that the cases it presented involved a referendum involving one question in Venezuela and no election in Cameroon where population is small or Ben Muhdi's biggest barangay.

Smartmatic, in its written comment to the court, said its previous exact optical scan (OCOS) machines were always found to be 100 percent accurate during tests by the Comelec's special bids and awards committee and technical working group.

It said the machines even surpassed Comelec's minimum system capabilities criteria of 99.995 percent accuracy.

Smartmatic also denied COM's allegation that its machines have a failure rate of two percent to 10 percent. It said COM based this on an alleged page from the Smartmatic website.

Smartmatic said the two percent to 10 percent failure rate was an industry observation in 2006 or earlier.

"Since then, there have been tremendous improvements in the optical mark reader technology," Smartmatic said.

If the COM had examined the updated website of Smartmatic, they would have seen that the PCOS' advertised accuracy rating was over 99.99999 percent, it said.

Maldives: Island paradise is hell for 300 OFWs

By Michael Lim Ubac

ONE OF THE BEST DIVE sites in The world may not be paradise for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs).

Over 300 distressed OFWs are allegedly living under sub-human conditions in the Maldives, an island country southwest of Sri Lanka, according to Sen. Manuel Villar.

A popular diving destination, the Maldives is the smallest Asian country in terms of both population and area, and is predominantly Muslim.

But some families can be hell for many Filipinos, said Villar in a statement.

On Wednesday, Villar's helpline dedicated to helping stranded migrant workers, received distress calls from several OFWs who complained that they were not being paid. They also claimed that they were forced to drink substandard and to take a bath using dirty water.

Pleading for aid

The senator called on Malacañang and the Department of Foreign Affairs to quickly extend its rescue plight.

"They are pleading for government assistance," he said.

OFWs Bernie Galvez, Oscar Velois, Ricardo Acosta and Mario Ventura said they along with their colleagues stationed in Villingili island, have not been receiving salaries while "bearing appalling living conditions," said the senator.

Villingili is a resort island on the Southern Atoll in the Maldives.

"We drink rainwater and take a bath using putrid water. Our quarters are cockroach-infested, and we have to contend with insufficient food," Villar recalled the distressed OFWs are saying.

The other OFWs who called Villar's helpline desk were Rodelio Cordero, Joseph Gonzales, Dominador Ramos, Alvin Bautista, Rikilid Arnan, William Merlas, Francis Salinas, Ariel Pagarigan, Benjie Arbis, Ferroso Serang-as, Jaro Mendoza, Jolicamie Javier, Jeff Edic, Mayton Moyare, Emanuel Corpuz, Zaldy Amarillo, Ronald Joaquin, Wilfredo Tabuso, Edwin Galano, Alex Calimag, Andre Alpuse, Jolly Aguayo, Abraham Sanchez, Jolander Dosti, Joel Bañas, Ariel Duarte, Elizalde Mendoza, Philip Yee and Lucio Cadiz.

No-fault insurance

The senator has endorsed the OFWs' case to the Departments of Foreign Affairs, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration.

The harsh conditions faced by many OFWs has prompted Villar to press for the application of the no-fault insurance system, a form of indemnity claim in which anyone injured in an accident receives direct payment from the company that insured them.

The allowance the need for victims to establish insolvency liability or fault through a civil case, said Villar.

The senator has filed Senate Bill No. 1040 or the Overseas Contract Workers Insurance Act, that seeks compulsory insurance for all OFWs, in addition to the benefits provided by Owwa.

He has also set up Migrant Offices for easier for migrant workers with legitimate complaints or problems for immediate assistance.

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Reject Palace demand for more names, JBC told

By Dona Pazolingan

A SELF-APPOINTED WATCHDOG OF Supreme Court appointments yesterday urged the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) to reject President Arroyo's request for other nominees to fill the vacant posts left by associate justices Dante Tinga and Alicia Austria-Martinez after their retirement.

The Supreme Court Appointments Watch (SCAW) said Mrs. Arroyo's decision to return the shortlist of nominees submitted by the JBC "undermined the independence" of the constitutional body.

"We urge the JBC to fulfill its mandate as an independent body and reject the returned shortlist, and to steadfastly uphold and maintain the integrity, probity, competence and independence of the Supreme Court," SCAW said in a statement.

SCAW claimed the President wants to appoint Supreme Court justices based on "personal loyalty to her."

On Monday, Malacañang formally returned the JBC shortlist and asked for "a wider array of nominees to be submitted for the President's consideration."

The shortlist had included Court of Appeals Associate Justice Mariflor Villaruma, Intellectual Property Associate Justice Francisco Villaruz Jr., University of Santo Tomas law school dean Ruben Ang, who were unanimously picked by all seven members of the JBC during final deliberations last June 25.

The rest are Court of Appeals Associate Justices Hakim Abdulwahid and Mariano del Castillo and lawyers Jose Mendoza Rodolfo Robles, who each got five votes.

The top choices of SC justices, Court of Appeals Associate Justice Jonathan Cadwaan Salonga did not make it to the shortlist. She got only three votes from the JBC. Malacañang aid acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera and former energy secretary Raphael Lotilla—they have pending cases before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Melo doesn't want a new commish

By Kristine L. Alave

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) Chair Jose Melo said yesterday Malacañang should not appoint a new commissioner to replace former Justice Leonida as it would just be a waste of taxpayer money.

Melo said Leonida's replacement would only serve a little over a year before the retirement term for the next expiree in February 2011.

"He will only serve for one year and a half" he will get a full pension. That would be a waste for the government," he said.

Melo said Leonida, whose appointment papers were not renewed last week, had not been assigned any election duties.

He said he had ordered an inventory of the cases Leonida was handling so these would be raffled off to the other commissioners.

Leonida, a former Regional Trial Court judge who served in Malabon and Laguna, was appointed to the Comelec by President Arroyo in July 2008.

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Online tutorial services are in

PETS SO BUSY SCHOOL DAYS last due to typhoons and fears of SCHOOL? Be industrious, new business opportunities are emerging for online tutorial centers.

Abaad Learning Systems on Wednesday launched its Old Magsaysay-based tutorial service which boasts of "top-caliber subject specialists" to help parents and students keep up with school work even while staying home for safety reasons.

"The growing demand for online learning is a reflection of many parents' concerns about the safety of their children as well as their determination to enable their young to excel and keep up with their academics," Rosanna Urrutia, Abaad Learning Systems president, said in statement. Philip C. Tubeza

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Will you marry me, Ellen Ross?

Andrew Soriano

Awardees honor heroes of journalism

By Alcuin Papa

IT WAS NIGHT FOR REMEMBERING brave and relatively unknown heroes in journalism.

When Ingquam columnist Patricia Evangelista, member for Emergent Leadership in Journalism, and Howie Severino of the GMA television network, executive for broadcasting in journalism received their awards given by the Tom Benedicto Media Center in the Philippines on Wednesday, they chose to pay tribute to their slain media colleagues, including those who still toil in anonymity for community papers and radio, and a former president whose government marked the return of basic rights, including press freedom.

Two other journalists were given posthumous awards.

The award is named after Edmund Tito Benedicto, a Dutch Catholic priest, journalist and educator who defended print freedom and the right to education during Adolf Hitler II, even in the face of death. He was beatified by Pope John Paul I on November 5, 1985 and is known as a martyr for press freedom.

"Severino and Evangelista were chosen because they have effectively used media to respond to the people's clamor for truth on issues and concerns affecting them," the Center said in a statement.

SEVERINO

EVANGELISTA

Absent awardees

The Center also honored their journalists Edgar Damoiseto and Marlene Esparar. "They lived the spirit of Blessed Tito Benedicto and stood for truth in times of threats, compromises, despite odds and reprisals from the powers-that-be," it added.

Both Evangelista and Severino cited the two journalists who were gunned down in separate incidents in pursuit of their stories.

"This award means so much in light of what is happening in the country. The Philippines is an odd country and it has been branded as the second-worst place for a journalist to work. To be mentioned in the same sentence as Edgar, Marlene and Howie is a big thing," Evangelista said.

The center cited Evangelista's columns on the disappearances and killings of members of progressive groups and journalists.

"We can't get used to it — that a man can disappear and never be seen again, that a mother will be shot as we have dialog warm tables. We need to stay angry at what shouldn't be, to continue to speak. Because if we accept this as the voice of the nation, we allow it," she said.

Severino, known for his investigative reports on the mistreatment, also recognized the dangers of being a journalist in the Philippines as he spoke of Damoiseto and Esparar.

Bravest work

"Both Edgar and Marlene did their bravest work on radio while exposing anomalies to corrupt parts of Mindanao. The fact that there are still fearless radio broadcasters in Mindanao means that Edgar and Marlene's spirits are alive, driving the survivors among us on to try to expose and unveil the corrupt, so that the nobility can bloom," he said in his acceptance speech.

Damoiseto, managing editor of the Zamboanga Scribe and a front-fielding commentator of DXXX was shot dead in May 2002 in Pagadian City.

Esparar, on the other hand, was a former employee of the Department of Agriculture who turned to journalism. Among her exposes was the controversial fertilizer fund scam involving former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante. She was shot in her home in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat in March 2005.

Severino also lauded other journalists in the could of Damoiseto and Esparar, calling them "courageous souls toiling in radio with little recognition, far from friends, who are the real leaders in journalism. May your tribe increase."

He said stressing the award's main focus: reflection on the life of former President Corazon "Cory" Aquino, who is now battling colon cancer.

Restoration of freedom

"She was an instrument in the restoration of our freedoms, like the freedom of the press. She is a symbol of what we want to be as a nation. We should think about, talk about, and reflect on what Cory did for us," he said.

The Tito Benedicto Award: Philippines is the country's version of the International Tito Benedicto Award given by the Union Catholique Internationale de la Presse, the world forum of professionals in secular and religious media.

Fr. Florangel Rosario Braid, Fr. Jose De Mesa and Angelo Elandroy Lorca were among the jurors this year.

Past winners include another Inquirer columnist, Conrado de Quiros, former Philippine Bureau chief Carolyn Arguillas, Lucila Lina Valdez and Patricia Dias.

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TV monitored for offensive content

WITH ABOUT HALF OF PROGRAMS on television containing violence, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched on Wednesday a "Sunny TV" campaign, which asks viewers to report "offensive" scenes and dialogue that they believe are not suitable for children.

DepEd Secretary Jesli Lapus said the campaign was designed to convince TV networks and advertisers to promote child-friendly shows.

He said the campaign hopes to reduce by at least 30 percent the incidence of "vulgarity, discrimination, sex, and violence" on television.

Lapus said children in three blocks (one spend about three hours a day in front of the television screen).

He said on average child would have watched 3,000 hours of television by the time he or she enters Grade 1 and 25,000 hours by the end of high school or "more time than what would be spent in a classroom entering a college degree."

Lapus said he believed "excessive violences, sex, and foul language on television are threats to our children's well-being."

"The TV that you are monitoring could be equal if not more influential than our teachers, because children spend more time with the TV monitor," said Lapus, echoing a still controversial view.

DepEd, the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), the National Council for Children's Television (NCCT), and Smart Communications recently asked an agreement that would allow the public to send complaints to the NCCT via text messaging, the telephone, or through the Internet.

Members of the public can report "non-child friendly TV shows" to the NCCT by typing SMS-DSTV(space)NAME OF CHILD-BIRTHDATE OF CHILD-MESSAGE to 796-6220 or SMS-DSTV(space)TV SHOW-EDAM(space)DATE OF AIRING to 796-6220. Philip C. Tubeza

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668 aliens barred this year

A TOTAL OF 668 ILLEGAL ALIENS HAVE been barred from entering the country during the first semester of the year, according to Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan.

Libanan said the bulk of the excluded aliens were interrogated at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) while the rest were barred in other ports like Cebu, Clark and Davao.

At standard operating procedure, aliens barred at the airports are immediately placed on the Immigration blacklist to prevent them from returning to the country.

Most of the excluded aliens had spurious travel documents and many of them are believed to be victims of human trafficking syndicates.

Transit point

"The syndicates have been using the Philippines as a transit point for trafficking their victims to other foreign destinations such as the United States, Canada and Europe," Libanan said.

Koreans topped the list of excluded aliens with 76, followed by 68 Chinese, 39 Japanese, 36 Indians, 27 Americans, 21 Taiwanese, 11 Singaporeans, nine Malaysians, nine Britons, and eight Australians.

"We cannot afford to relax our guard repeatedly in these times when terrorism, criminals and human traffickers roam the world to strike fear and victimize the citizens of many countries and societies," Libanan said.

Libanan said he is pleased that the bureau's immigration officers are doing a good job of turning away undesirable aliens at the ports of entry.

Vigilance

"Undoubtedly, the vigilance of our immigration officers helps keep our country safe because they have turned back foreigners whose presence here could have posed a potential threat to our security and caused burden to our society," he said.

The bureau chief added illegal aliens are now barring different tipping keys the 96-hour deportation from mid-end August due to the rigorous training that immigration officers have been undergoing to bolster their capability in profiling passengers and detecting fraudulent travel documents.

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JPE on Cha-cha: No way before 2010 elections

From page A1

House Resolution No. 1109.

The measure calls for the convening of a constituent assembly (Con-ass) to amend the Constitution even without the participation of the Senate, setting a major premium to the Charter proposedly allowing Congress to do this by a three-fourths vote.

Cortes said the resolution that could pave the way for the adoption of a parliamentary system was meant to keep Ms Arroyo in power beyond the end of her term in 2010.

'Many defects'

Enrile said that the 1987 Charter harnessed our soul entitled under the Aquino administration had "many defects," pointing to the multiparty system, the vague provision on Con-ass voting, doubts of the Sabah claim in the territorial boundaries of the country and discouraging foreign employment.

He cited Article 17, Section 1 "Any amendment to, or revision of, the Constitution may be proposed by: (1) The Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its members; or (2) A constitutional convention."

Vicars body votes separately

Enrile insisted though that voting to amend or change the Constitution under the present Charter was separate for both houses since, he said, the Constitution contemplated two houses comprising the Congress.

"If you have a rational mind to interpret the Constitution, there will be no difficulty because it is not the House of Representatives that is considered Congress, nor the Senate," he said. "It must be the combination of the two... We've adopted the principle of bicameralism."

Proxy squatter is part of the "hocks and holdouts embedded in the Constitution—they fight each other. What the other side does is not finished until agreed upon or worked upon by the other side, and vice versa."

Each of the two Houses has separate officers, journals, records and number of membership, said Enrile.

"It has to be joint and separate voting," he said, explaining that a Con-ass was a joint session of both Houses—"but Houses brought together and they must vote separately to determine the quorum of each house separately."

Return to two-party system

Enrile said that if the framers of the new Constitution would want to stick with the presidential system, then they must adopt the two-party system contained in the 1935 Constitution.

Presently he said various coalitions a party for election purposes only and there's no party discipline.

"You are a member of one party today. Tomorrow you'll be a member of another party. When before even imperfect as it were, you are a Nacionalista, you are a Nacionalista. You are a Liberal, you are a Liberal."

In short, he said a multiparty system was not suitable to the present presidential system. "But can never have a president that will represent a majority."

He said providing a cutoff election with a multiparty system as a presidential setup—which also needs sound, rational amendments—would be expensive.

"Given our very persistent way of handling politics in the country, you lengthen the agony of the nation," he said.

Foreigners can own lands

Enrile favored allowing foreigners to own land "if they own it in themselves," referring to no-hassle offshore areas.

"Dry lands should be preserved for our own," as reserve crop lands suitable to crop production—farmlands, coconut lands or orchards, he said.

But sandy areas not needed for agriculture or places that are only suitable for residential purposes could be given to foreigners, he said.

"I can't see any valid reason to oppose foreigners owning lands that are reclaimed ... if they come here, bring their capital, develop infrastructures and these generate employment of Filipino people and create wealth for Filipinos," he said.

60-40 Pinoy ownership

But he maintained that 60-40 business ownership structure in favor of Filipinos should stay in the Constitution. If it concerned exploitation of natural resources or mines—timber, gold, copper, coal, lands.

He said Filipinos, who have the capital, could very well raise minerals, harvest timber and engage in other business ventures "on shore."

But offshore, foreigners should be allowed to even business shares about the present equation in oil exploration since only multinational oil companies have the means and technology to drill oil in deep waters surrounding the country, said Enrile.

JPE AT THE INQUIRER Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile talks inquirer.net on Wednesday that there are many defects in the 1987 Constitution like the multiparty system, the vague provision on Con-ass voting, division of the Sabah claim in the territorial boundaries of the Philippines and discouraging foreign employment on foreign employees. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Some journeys change mankind forever. Sally Ride, first American woman in space. Buzz Aldrin, Apollo 11, first steps on the moon in 1969. Jim Lovell, Apollo 13, unimaginable

LOUIS VUITTON

Rules for pre-paid power out

By Amy R. Roño

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has officially issued the rules to govern the prepaid metering scheme for electricity, allowing distribution utilities to begin offering the service to their customers.

The scheme is expected to help residential customers in managing their electricity consumption.

Now that the rules have been issued, distribution utilities can apply with the ERC to be allowed to offer the prepaid retail electric service (PRES) to their residential customers, the commission said.

Under the PRES, a residential customer can purchase a specific amount of electric energy (watts or kwh) and then use up the load worth it is exhausted.

The system, which uses an electronic metering system, is also expected to benefit the distribution utilities as it is seen to allow for "operational efficiency."

Customers will have the option to apply for a prepaid retail electric service or a reliometry basis, subject to the distribution utility having the infrastructure for a prepaid electric service.

Like cellphones

"Budget-conscious residential consumers can now control their electricity consumption because it is expected to stop electric energy credit to consumable retail customers and then use electricity until the credit is exhausted. This is similar to the load purchased by cellphone users," ERC chair Zenaida G. Cruz-Ducut said in a statement.

According to Ducut, the electricity rates will be the same as those charged under the existing postpaid scheme, unless the distribution utility applies for and the ERC approves a different rate structure for prepaid meters.

To further protect the consumers, Ducut said distribution utilities will be required to keep a record for each prepaid customer that will show a summary of purchases of electric energy credits for the preceding two years.

The summary report should be provided by the distribution utility within five days from receipt of a customer's request, she said.

Pre-paid meters

According to the ERC, the utility should also provide reasonable means to allow residential electricity to purchase electric energy credit, or any given time, to ensure continuous electricity service.

The rest of the prepaid metering system is to be shouldered by the distribution utility so no meter deposit will be collected from the consumers.

It also set required to source prepaid meters that are certified and compliant with the standards of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Prepaid meters will be subjected to further testing and certification by the IEC.

Under the rules, the prepaid electricity meter system must have the capabilities to load the purchased energy display real time information that will show the load is being consumed, and give warning that the load is close to zero thereby providing sufficient buffer before electricity is completely disconnected.

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Gov't revives plan to add one year to college

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE PROPOSAL TO ADD another year to college courses is back, or if taking some from President Macapagal-Arroyo's "unfinished" time of the former Administration.

In the meantime, the CHED will automate initially the reform of those courses that take five years to finish.

According to CHED Chair Emmanuel Angeles, this accommodates will "no structure" courses like engineering, accountancy, pharmacy and physical therapy "so there won't be any additional costs because those courses already take five years to finish."

The aim is to make graduates of these courses globally competitive, he said.

In last June, the President said that the Presidential Task Force on Education had recommended that students seeking "professions seeking international recognition" like "engineering, architecture, accountancy, pharmacy and physical therapy should have 10 years of basic education, two years of pre-university, and another three years of university.

Restructuring scheme

"The problem about the current system is that the first three years of general education [by five-year courses] is of no use. Students drop out after that, they won't even get a title," said CHED Executive Director Julito Vitriolo.

What was proposed is restructuring schools, at the end of a two-year pre-university course, a student would have learned specific skills or an associate degree and after five years if they decide not to pursue medicine, they get a bachelor's degree, if they intended graduate, he said.

Vitriolo said the CHED technical committees are reviewing the plan so that a directive can be issued "as soon as possible" for the restructuring of the five-year courses.

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DEALERS WELCOME!

Training plane ditches at Naia

By Jerome Aning

A TRAINING AIRCRAFT DITCHED on runway 06 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Thursday after of its tires burst while landing.

The 4HO-DCS aircraft owned and managed by Victoria Air Academy on the grassy portion of Runway 13/31 at the Naia around 1:15 a.m., according to a report of the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA).

The plane had a crew flight student, according to the MIAA.

The agency said strong winds that battered the airport were responsible for the burst that caused the right front tire of the plane to blow up.

No one hurt

The pilot , Capt. Alejandro Sagala, and his three unidentified passengers were not injured.

Traffic from MIAA fire and rescue, medical, operations and safety units were quickly deployed to the incident site. MIAA assistant general manager for operations Octavio Lina supervised the rescue and clearing operations.

Due to the incident, Runway 13/31 was temporarily closed but not flights were affected. Aircraft using the runway were directed nearby Runway 06/24. Runway 13/31 was back to normal operations by 1:50 p.m.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, July 31, 2009
16th Week in Ordinary Time
Ignatius of Loyola

1st Reading: Lev 23:1, 4-11, 15-16, 27, 34b-37
Gospel: Mt 13:54-58

Jesus went to his hometown and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did he get all this and these special powers? Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't Mary his mother and aren't James, Joseph, Simon and Judas his brothers? Aren't all his sisters living here? Then where did he get all this?" And he was made to lose action.

Jesus said to them, "The only place where prophets are not welcome is their hometown and in their own family." And he did not perform many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Commentary:

The Day of Atonement, or Yom Kippur, is still the most sacred day in the Jewish calendar and is the 4th of Tishri. The Day of Atonement is a day devoted to the need of cleansing from sin and how evil may be approached. It included details on what animals to sacrifice, where blood was to be sprinkled, for whom and why. How was a rich sacrifice of priests and people before others? Indeed, we forgetting that God's was removal and blessing assured. The God who dwelt in their midst kept them secure. They could not be Mesopotamia, and yet He had their experience of God's love and care. They were to be God's royal treasure, His people, and the place of His earthly was to be sacred for us.

In the Day of Atonement, we see God's desire that He be approached by the only Holy One. Here, God is holy and required the removal of sin as a condition of acceptance, the people His love. We have an absolute need for a substitute to go before God and intercede for us. An ideal of priests, who will stand before God with the sins of their offenses. Oh let it that priest, our redeemer!

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Palace: Smooth transfer of power not GMA's job

By TJ Burgonio

ITS NOT PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's job to prepare for a smooth transfer of power to her successor, Malacañang said yesterday.

Whether or not Ms Arroyo is stepping down at the end of her term on June 30, 2010, has been the subject of endless speculation.

"The transition there would be the end of the term. When the term is going to end, I think that is going to be the successor's concern that we're all waiting for," said Undersecretary Anthony Golez in a briefing.

A few days ago, former Sen. Jose Presidente Pulido Laurel in a commentary in the Inquirer Mr. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had created a peaceful and orderly transfer of power from her administration to the next.

Transition team

Golez, who served the Aquino administration in various capacities, said that in her last State of the Nation Address delivered in July 1991, Aquino announced the formation of a transition team that would ensure a smooth turnover to whichever would succeed her, that she would not to be President Fidel V. Ramos.

Golez, a deputy presidential spokesperson, balked when he was asked if President Arroyo would take steps to ensure the smooth transfer of power to the next Chief Executive.

No guide needed

"I don't know if they [successor] need little steps before they can come in. If they're running for president, it must be that they're fit to be the president, and they don't need any guide or anything to lead them toward the right direction," he said.

In the same briefing, Cabinet Secretary Silvestre Bello III cautioned presidential aspirants who attack the President to guard against misdirection.

"Those are the crab presidentiables," he said. "It's dangerous to have leaders who depend on the weaknesses of others or who seem to climb the ladder by putting down their fellowmen."

He urged the presidential wannabes to campaign "based on their strength," not on the weaknesses of the other party.

'Double speak'

"The President has adopted a high level of tolerance for political criticisms. She knows that her critics are winning in scientific. We know that the only way to get into the headlines is to hit the President without basis," he said.

Bello said those who attack Ms Arroyo in public but seek her endorsement for their presidential bids in private as people who engage in "double speak."

"Those are what we call double speak. They portend to be attacking the President. It doesn't speak well of a person who wants to be a leader of our country," he said.

Earlier, the President's son, Mexico Jose Miguel Arroyo, seemed presidential aspirations he would not name who, he said, attacked his mother at every turn but severely some in are late to ask his her endorsement in 2010.

ERRATUM:

The Xtreme Magic Sing ad on July 28, 2009 wrongly stated the price of its model RV12 to be 11,500 pesos. The correct price is 12,500 pesos. Xtreme Magic Sing extends its apologies to all readers.

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NORTH EDSA SUCAT

Without Senate's support, Cebu solon says he'll drop Con-ass

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER yesterday he would rather drop a move to amend the Constitution via a constituent assembly (Con-ass) if it does not have the support of the Senate.

The Cebu lawmaker said he did not wish House Resolution 1109 to be an issue against the administration and its allies during the upcoming elections.

Cebu's sentiment on the Charter change (Cha-cha) measure to junk calls for protests against it, including and the House of Representatives.

The motion to commit HR 1109 to the Senate will be taken up again next week.

"I will promote it because I want to present this House ... This will be an election issue. They will be demonstrating again against Gloria, against the administration, prolonging the term. Every people who know that nothing will happen will always want that this will hang," Garcia said separately.

Batches, revising the Charter through a constitutional convention is a more feasible option, he said.

Condemned and crucified

In a privilege speech Tuesday, Garcia called his detractors action on the resolution swift and the end to the controversy because the House was being "castigated, condemned and crucified."

He also noted par on his belief that the House needed the Senate to propose changes to the Constitution, in contrast to the stand of others who insisted that the House would gather the necessary three-fourths vote to pass amendments.

Garcia was one of the sponsors of the resolution and his stand surprised supporters of the move.

Cebu Rep. Hipolito Mercado said the reinserted of HR 1109 in the Senate would be in order.

House 'demonized'

Barzaga added that bringing the case to the Senate would fulfill the position that the House alone could revise the Constitution for as long as it has the members. Without this requirement, there would be no Supreme Court case to clarify Con-ass procedures, he added.

"I am doing this for Mindanao. Who is being attacked while this is ongoing?" he said. He also pointed out that the House was likewise being "demonized."

He agreed with Barzaga that sending the resolution to the Senate would mean its end.

"That is true because that's the prerogative of the Senate. We cannot do it alone, only Congress can propose changes ... Of course, it will not survive it, that's their call from the beginning," he said.

Garcia said that those who would vote against sending the resolution to the Senate would face more denouncements from an angry public.

'Suicidal'

He disagreed with the declared intention of HR 1109 proponents that they only want to trigger a Supreme Court ruling on Con-ass.

"No, that's dangerous, that's suicidal for us because I know the Supreme Court will just dochere [but we cannot do it]," he said.

Enrile: Erap mobbed everywhere

From page A1

editors said reporters.

Enrile said he was looking forward to another trip with Estrada, this time in Cebu, bailiwick of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who lashed out at the movie actor turned politician in her nationally televised State of the Nation Address on Monday.

His daughter claimed she inherited a gargantuan "on the brink of bankruptcy" when she took over from Estrada after he was ousted in 2001 for corruption.

Bought choppers, planes, cars

Enrile reiterated his belief that Estrada, who was convicted of plunder in 2007 but was pardoned by Ms. Arroyo, would contest the presidential elections next year.

"Based on my personal observation, he still has," said Enrile, president emeritus of Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino.

He said earlier that Estrada was preparing to run for the presidency again as shown by his recent purchase of new helicopters, an airplane and vans apparently for use in his campaign sorties.

Likely court challenge

Enrile said he expected that Estrada's bid would be challenged. "Some people will file a disqualification proceeding against him," he said, adding that Estrada's lawyers have prepared for this.

The Constitution provides that "the president is not eligible for any reelection," according to Enrile. Estrada will insist that he is not the president contemplated in the Constitution, said Enrile and he expected that the issue will reach the Supreme Court. "You can argue either way," he said.

Having been granted executive clemency shortly after his plunder conviction, Estrada started to go around the country last year.

"He's actually campaigning," Enrile said. "He says, pasasalamatan (Estrada) here when you call a pasasalamat, whether you call it some other name, the movement he appeals to a crowd like that and you savor your hands and throw yourself in effect you're receiving republican spirit in your favor."

He wants to complete term

"According to Estrada, he wants to complete his presidency which was disrupted," said Enrile.

The 85-year-old Enrile said that from the trips he had gone to upon the invitation of Estrada, he couldn't help but marvel at the huge crowds, especially in Mindanao, that followed him around.

People's reaction

He said he had been in many political campaigns but the crowds that surrounded Estrada like visited President were "just great."

"She could hardly move," he said. People just crowded in "stupendous" with Estrada.

"I also ask myself the question what makes people react the way they react [to Estrada]. People are running after him. Why? I don't know. But it's a fact that you can't ignore, you can't deny it, you can't throw it away," Enrile said.

He said it wasn't simply because Estrada was a movie star. He said that he campaigned with Estrada and the late action king of Bicolandia Fernando Poe Jr., who even had lost in the 2004 vote against Ms Arroyo. He said Estrada drew more crowds than Poe.

GMA will easily win

Enrile said he was not reticent about Ms Arroyo's political plans, on her repeated desire to run for a seat in Congress at the end of her term next year, but said she has to step down.

Ms Arroyo is said to be taking over the district of her son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, some 2010.

Enrile said if Ms Arroyo does run for Congress, she will win.

"Of course, there are always people who think they can beat her but my God, the reality is that the President has such vast powers and plenty of resources to win an election," he said.

Enrile said that Ms Arroyo will definitely win because she has "popularity, affinity to the people and the family name Macapagal is a byword in the area."

IN PRIVATE Ex-President Joseph Estrada in his first time after 22 years enjoys the role of husband to comedienne Ms Jackie Rice (Mrs. Jackie Ejercito) "Mag Tanging Ama."

PHOTO BY NOEL PABALATE

Newspaper readership on the rise

From page A1

"We have to once and for all debunk the myth that newspapers are dying. They are not," Steve Garner, Nielsen's executive director for media at Synovate, said at a press conference yesterday.

"People with money are still choosing newspapers because these allow them to educate and focus. Newspapers are a 'must buy-and' medium, unlike TV and radio which are 'must look' media. Newspapers are alive and well, and continue to offer great opportunities to advertisers."

According to the fourth annual Synovate Media Atlas, newspapers continue to be the "trickiest" advertising medium, considering the rise in newspaper readership among individuals with purchasing power and the way consumers perceive ads on print as opposed to those on other media.

'Right to quality'

The survey, which involved more than 8,000 respondents from all over the country, showed that 56 percent of Filipinos still preferred to look through ads in newspapers and magazines.

Individuals from the A and B income brackets, or those with the most purchasing power, were also reading newspapers more. Survey data revealed that from 56 percent in the 2007-2008 survey period, 64 percent of A and B consumers were now reading newspapers.

"Many marketers are talking about a flight to quality, and newspapers are showing their increased importance as a good medium to reach those who have money to spend," Garner said.

Food, entertainment, sports

Among the types of newspapers included in the survey, the daily and the Sunday papers captured the highest readership figures, at 35 percent of respondents for both types of papers during the most recent wave of data collection covering the 2008-2009 survey period.

THE GOOD NEWS Newspapers continue to be read and continue to be considered the "trickiest" advertising medium.

Newspapers, in general, registered a reach of 38 percent, while magazines posted a reach of 32 percent.

The most read sections in the newspaper are the front page, entertainment and sports, the survey showed.

Ads don't disappear

In terms of newspaper sources, most newspaper readers buy their own, borrow another person's copy, rely on household subscriptions, and read the newspapers that their offices provide.

"Newspapers have always been important," Garner said. "In fact, newspapers are the first on-demand media—you can have them when you want them. The advertisements there don't disappear. Newspapers also reach the hard-to-reach upscale audiences."

"There's a dramatic rise in the upper socio groups that are reading newspapers. They're all after quality. I haven't seen such a strong shift in newspapers to Ateneo such as this," Garner added.

Best way to relax

Apart from newspapers and magazines, another medium advertising medium, television, also remained high up to the consumer consciousness index, making it another likely advertising medium.

The survey showed that household, or portable, TV viewership was now causing some jitters, with 99 percent of respondents saying they preferred to relax in front of their TV sets, watching free-TV channels.

The level of pay-TV viewership has likewise increased, with 31 percent of respondents saying they have cable TV, as compared with 31 percent in the 2007-2008 survey period.

"TV is still an important part of the advertising industry. People are paying more for cable TV," Garner said.

Challenge for online

Internet-based media, such as online and mobile, were likewise starting to gain ground in terms of reach, he said. However, these still had a long way to go before reaching the status that traditional advertising media such as newspapers, magazines and TV had achieved in terms of reach.

"Online is still a small fraction of the advertising budget. Those who neglect mainstream media will lose share and may go out of business. Mainstream media works," Garner said.

"The challenge for online is to create relevance. The challenge for all types of media, actually, is to create relevance enough to gain consumers' attention. Mainstream media has done that."

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IN COURT AFTER CAMP TOUR Misamis Oriental's acting Court of Appeals (above) Melissa Rosca joins the CHR for an ocular inspection of a reclaimed portion of Port Mayapay in Misamis Bulgos part of investigation into her alleged abduction and torture. She claims she and two companions could have been detained there last May. Rosca is escorted here by Karapatan secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez and her lawyer Jacinto Jimenez, right (Inset Fernando)

CHR: Melissa trip to camp inconclusive

Pronouncing Ad

"Only Melissa can tell. What we did is we accompanied her. We let her go around the place and swallow things," De Lima told reporters after Rosca walked around the intelligence battalion headquarters less than an hour.

De Lima said that from Rosca' reactions to the facades, the walk-around was "inconclusive." She said Rosca was unable to point to anything specific in the area that would prove the activist was tortured during her six-day captivity there.

Maj. Gen. Ralph Villanueva, the commander of the 7th Infantry Division, escorted Rosca and the CHR team as they inspected the restricted area.

Villanueva expressed surprise upon being told that Rosca was in the CHR van.

Speaking with reporters after the inspection, Villanueva said he felt the military was "being set up" because of how Rosca had implicated the 7th Infantry Division in her abduction and torture.

Rights abuse not allowed

Rosca, a member of the Oil chapter of the Bayanang Aktibistang Manggagawa (Bayan), had claimed that on May 19, she and her two companions—Jonnifer Catubos and John Edward Inocencio—were seized by armed men in La Paz, Tarlac, and taken to what appeared to be a military camp.

She said she was accused of being a member of the communist New People's Army (NPA) and held and tortured for six days. She was taken by her captors to her aunt's house in Quezon City on May 25.

Her companions were subsequently released as well.

But Villanueva reiterated yesterday that he did not allow any human rights violations by his officers and men.

He disclosed that nothing like what Rosca purportedly experienced had taken place or would ever take place under his watch.

"We are being blamed but we don't have anything since that. It's up to our investigative body to look into that as we are cooperating," he said.

Shaking

Marie Hilao-Enriquez, secretary general of the human rights group Karapatan, and Reverend Manolo, a farmer who claimed to have survived months of torture in the hands of the military, had to pull a shaking Rosca inside the barracks.

Once inside, Rosca' right hand shook as she pointed to an area that seemed familiar.

Assisted by Enriquez, she entered the soldiers' quarters and directed some tables and other structures to the area.

De Lima said the CHR had asked to be allowed to visit the 7th Military Intelligence Battalion barracks.

"Melissa was blindfolded for the most part of her captivity," De Lima said. "We have an informant who said [the barracks] sort of [fits] with certain descriptions by Rosca of the place where she was detained."

The CHR team and Rosca were unable to check other areas in the reclamation area camp because the activist was due to testify at the Court of Appeals (CA) for her petition for a writ of amparo.

Petition for protection

At the CA, Rosca witnessed her petition for court protection against the military despite her scheduled return to the United States within the week.

Associate Justice Noel Tijam, presiding officer of the CA's 10th Division that also includes Associate Justices Ashwin Tensig and Normandie Pizarro, told Tensio that the writ of amparo did not extend beyond Philippine shores.

He said that even if the court issued a writ, this might prove useless and unenforceable because Rosca had professed disbelief at divine endeavors.

"That's the dilemma of the court. How can it be effective ... [we would] like to be assured it would not be toothless, useless," Tijam said.

The appellate court said that had Rosca not retracted to appear personally before it, her petitioners would have been ordered.

Rosca took the witness stand to affirm her affidavit narrating her abduction and torture in a suspected military camp.

Under questioning from the justices, she said she wanted protection and order for herself whenever she was in the country but also for her Philippine-based relatives.

Tijam eventually asked whether she was "sympathetic" to the NPA, but failed to draw a categorical answer after several attempts.

Not a crime

"We will not take it against you," assured the justice, who drew a reply from the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG) that being an NPA member was not a crime as long as one did not engage in criminal activity.

Rosca admitted that she spent for her trips to join Bayan activities here, and described herself as an activist and not an NPA member.

"Well, I never spoke to any [NPA member] that I knew of so I wouldn't know what [their cases is]," she told the court.

When Tijam asked if she was "optimistic" or leaned against the military, Rosca said that "what I experienced personally convinced me even more" of the military's culpability in political killings and disappearances.

She said she would push through with filing a human rights case against the Philippine government when she returns to the United States.

Sanctuary

Rosca' lawyers Pete Fernandez said the fate of anyone's and lobbies' duty that they were seeking would leave the affected "emotionless."

He said "the threat of abduction remains" against Rosca.

"We believe if someone has vested that's out of the Philippines. We believe there's no more vested offense. It's symbolic or else of international efficacy," he said.

In response, Tijam said Rosca had no use for a symbolic order that could not be enforced.

The court was surprised when Fernandez asked if to suppress the video shown by Bayan Rep. Josito Belmonte and Akbayan Rep. Pedro Arroyo allegedly showing Rosca in an NPA camp.

Rosca again denied she was the woman in the video. Her lawyer insisted that their petition be before data covered everything "that violates her right to privacy."

During the hearing, the OSG team said Catubos, 31, was a fugitive with eight pending arrest warrants, including one for murder.

Rosca said the warrant about Catubos's arrest warrants only after her abduction.

Catubos has not surfaced and sought protection from the court. Neither has Inocencio, 36, and Fernandez said he did not know where he was.

Members of the OSG led by Assistant Solicitor General Amparo Cabotaje-Tang argued that President Macapagal-Arroyo and the seven ranking military and police officials cited in the habeas petition had done nothing to threaten Rosca.

Tang said Rosca had suffered a police investigation.

Credibility at stake

According to Palparan and Alcover, the CHR should look into allegations that Rosca is an NPA member because her credibility is at stakes.

Palparan appealed for fairness and said the military should not be singled out as the only suspect in Rosca' alleged abduction and torture.

"We are not saying [to not investigate the military and only focus on the NPA. Why are they just focusing on the military when there is no hard evidence against it? Why are focus on the group of [Bayan Reps.] Satur Ocampo?" ... Why don't they conduct the investigation and broaden it? It may not be the military, it may not be the NPA, it may be other persons. But why exempt the NPA?" Palparan said at the forum Friday.

He also challenged the activists backing Rosca to produce Catubos and Inocencio.

"Why can't they produce them to prove what had happened to them? ... Why didn't they file a writ of amparo or habeas corpus for them?" he said.

But Akbar Rep. Ebed Lagman, speaking at the same forum, said more evidence should be presented to show the link between Rosca and the NPA.

He said the use who allegedly sent the video to Palparan and Alcover should come out.

Lagman added that even if Rosca was shown to be a member of the NPA, this was not a sufficient excuse for the military or anyone else to abduct and torture her. With reports from Leila B. Salaverria in Manila

US takes it seriously

IN WASHINGTON, A SENIOR official of the US State Department said of Melissa Rosca' case: "We are aware of these allegations. We take very seriously concerns and security of any American citizen, and we are trying to get more information on this."

At a briefing for Philippine journalists covering President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit, the official noted that the Philippines had shown "extremely positive" results in reducing the number of extrajudicial killings.

"President Arroyo has said that even one extrajudicial killing is too many. We continue to encourage progress in the reduction and elimination of [those] killings and the prosecution of those involved. But while we raise it, it should not be done for at the benefit of the Philippines and you all," the official said. AMY CORTESANO-PASCUAL

CHUMMY CHR Chair Leila de Lima and Maj. Gen. Ralph Villanueva, the Army's 7th Infantry Division commander, share a laugh. He says the military is being "set up" when the division headquarters is alleged to be a torture camp. She says the findings from the inspection are "inconclusive." CHRISTINE AMORA

'No one in RP has been prayed for as much as Cory'

Pronouncing Ad

more housewife, 'resting alone.'

"She protested and the bed and now even when she's no longer for government, she continues to lead," Bocaut said.

"Let us pray that all those who govern will continue to lead, even when they are no longer in government," Bocaut said.

Aquino's brother Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, and sisters-in-law Elena Aquino-Lichauco, retired Air Mass organized by the Society of Edta Eucaristicos.

The 76-year-old Aquino, who is suffering from stage 4 colon cancer, has been confined at the Makati Medical Center since June 25. She was diagnosed with cancer in March last year.

Leaders of the Catholic Church sought to comfort the family of Aquino by supporting the Filipino's eternal journey to his side in ordering democracy after the 20-year Marcos rule.

"We join the Filipino people in thanking God for the freedom and democracy that she helped bring back to the country in 1986," Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, wrote Aquino's only son, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Forever grateful

"The country will forever be grateful for the sacrifices of Ninoy and her husband. Many have offered in response to the duress and challenge that our country is worth dying for," the prelate said.

The Catholic Church hierarchy has expressed its solidarity with the rest of the country in praying for Aquino.

"I wish to assure you that we are continuing to remember her in our prayers together with the people of the Philippines. Together we join her with her God's will be done," Lagdameo wrote Senator Aquino.

On Wednesday, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) said its 1,200 member schools would offer daily Masses for the former president.

Aside from offering prayers and Masses, the CEAP said its members schools would display symbolic yellow ribbons in support of Aquino, while students would be made to understand her role in establishing the political opposition against Marcos.

Prayers continue to be said for Aquino at the Manila City Hall and Greenhill chapel in Makati.

Extended

The original week-long daily healing Masses organized by the Manila government has been extended. Mayor Alfredo Lim ordered the extension, saying that "prayers must continue to be offered for the ultimate recovery" of Aquino.

"We can but foresee good over her quite a long time as much as her," Erben added. "This is a lesson for all of us from Tita Cory. Death in God' no matter what happens. And hopefully, you live long and people would want you to live long, or that you could still continue to work for people in Jesus' name."

Lim remains optimistic that his former boss would recover from her ailment. He was appointed head of the National Bureau of Investigation during Aquino' presidency.

"Let's continue praying and asking for a miracle for her. I know she'll support that," Lim told reporters.

Moves

Rumors swirl of ailing Aquino confirmed offering favors prayers for her on the fourth day of novena Masses in Makati yesterday.

Among those who attended the Mass in Greenhills shopping center former Senate President Franklin Drilon, who served as Aquino's executive secretary, retired Gen. Romeo Montalbo, Cindy Siobman, Marylin Aniceto and Aquino nephew Rafael Lopa.

Lopa again urged those who wanted to see his aunt to just pray for her since doctors have advised the family not to entertain her many visitors.

Security very tight

"She's very sick, she's very weak. Dad's other [is very important to have [less visitors]. ... Simple cause from different places. As much as possible [the doctors] want to avoid any stress complications," he said.

Security at the MMC, especially on the ninth floor where Aquino is staying, remained tight as long-time aides and media people seeking updates on her condition. With a report from Dona Pazzibugan

Swine flu, crisis couldn't keep tourists away

By Kristine L. Alave

THE INFLUENZA A(H1N1) SCARE and the global financial crisis have had little adverse effect on local tourism as close to four million visitors swamped to the country's regular destinations in the first half of the year, the Department of Tourism (DOT) said yesterday.

The DOT's first semester report said the 3.89 million tourists from January to June represented a 16.5-percent improvement over the same period last year.

Of the number, over 800,000 were foreign tourists. They were up from the 760,000 foreigners who visited the Philippines in the first semester of 2008.

The numbers of domestic tourists are to be increased by 28 percent to 2.96 million, the DOT report said.

Tourism Secretary Ace Durano in the report said there was a drop in the number of foreign arrivals from certain markets because of the global financial downturn, but the overall picture has fueled expectations.

The rise in tourist traffic, he said, could be attributed to the changing lifestyles of Filipinos.

"Likewise, the changing lifestyles and travel patterns of more Filipinos to spend their Holy Week, long weekends, and summer and holiday vacations in the various tourist areas in the country boosted tourist flow," he said.

"Foreign arrivals also increased by 6 percent for the first half of the year despite a decrease of 6 percent for visitors to East Asia and the Pacific," he said.

Durano was optimistic the growth would continue the rest of the year.

"As tourism facilities and products continue to expand, the DOT anticipates greater growth in tourist arrivals to key destinations towards the end of 2009," he said.

The provinces of Camarines Sur, which is known for its beaches and surfing, was the top pulser. The province received 902,000 local and foreign visitors in the first semester, the DOT report said.

"The provincial government of Camarines Sur's investment in a world-humbling tourism product stimulated private reliance while bolstering demand for more accommodations, rest services and transportation," the report said.

Cebu was the second most visited destination, with 830,000 tourists.

TAIWAN FLU VACCINE FOR RP

Manila Economic and Cultural Office Resident Representative Antonio L. Basilio visits the facility of Adimmune Corporation, a new vaccine plant located in Taiwan. Taichung County, Taiwan, which is one of only eight in the world. Starting August, Adimmune will start producing (A)H1N1. In a meeting in Cebu with officials of the Taiwan Humanity Mission, Basilio said he was assured of Taiwan government support in overcoming situation in the Philippines. The Philippines and Taiwan have a Memorandum of Understanding on health cooperation.

DACER-CORBITO MURDERS

Dumlao arraignment deferred

By Tina G. Santos

THE ARRAIGNMENT OF FORMER POLICE officer Glenn Dumlao as an accused in the Dacer-Corbito murder case was deferred yesterday, as his lawyers asked for more time to study the case.

Rogelio Ignasi, one of Dumlao's lawyers, said they moved for the deferment because they really learned yesterday about the amended charges filed by the Department of Justice that included Dumlao as one of the accused.

He said Judge Myra Garcia Fernandez had agreed to give Dumlao's lawyers time to study the issue and has reset the arraignment for Aug. 10.

According to Cesar Mallonzo, another of Dumlao's lawyers, they wanted to clarify why Dumlao was included among the accused when the Supreme Court, in October 2005, excluded him from the list of accused in the 2000 murder of publicist Salvador Dacer and the latter's driver Emmanuel Corbito.

Discharged as accused

"There was already a SC ruling discharging him as an accused. There was a DoJ resolution saying that he had no participation in the crime. Apparently there was a mistranding or misinterpretation as to why he was included as an accused when he was supposed to be discharged already," Mallonzo said.

Mallonzo added that they are still studying the possibility of Dumlao's applying again for admission to the government's witness protection program.

The high court also ruled earlier that Dumlao, being a law enforcement officer, was disqualified from inclusion in the witness protection program.

Government prosecutors are reportedly eyeing Dumlao as a state witness in the Dacer-Corbito double murder case.

"He can be a state witness or an ordinary witness, or with the same testimony," he said. "But as a duty, he could be called by the prosecution to be a witness, otherwise we could be cited for contempt," Ignasi said.

Dumlao, who won a bullet-proof win over a long-drawn stint, was escorted to and from the courtroom by a group of black-shirted agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Fernandez barred members of the media and "those who are not parties to the case" from the courtroom.

A third lawyer, Hazel Galleang, who acted as Dumlao's counsel in the United States, was also in the hearing.

Dumlao returned to the Philippines last Sunday following his extradition from the United States and has been staying at the NBI headquarters.

Dumlao's return came 32 days after the extradition of another ex-police officer and fugitive in the Dacer-Corbito murders, Cesar Mancao, who was also one of those charged for the killings.

Mancao, Dacer and another fugitive ex-police officer, Michael Fay Ayalan, were colleagues at the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (Paoctf), which was headed by then Philippine National Police Chief and now Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

The three were among the 22 people charged in 2001 for the murder of Dacer and Corbito who disappeared on Nov. 24, 2000, and whose shattered remains were found the following April in Cavite.

The others are among charged for the 2000 killing of publicist Salvador Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

Lacson linked

The three fled to the US after they were charged. Aquino's sowing a tied sentence in the US for a separate murder charge.

Last February, while still in the US, Mancao executed an affidavit linking Lacson and his fellow officers, Aquino and Ayalan, to the double murder.

Ethics case vs Villar to resume next week

By Christine O. Avendaño

VILLAR

THE HEARING ON THE ethics complaint against Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. on the C5 Road extension controversy is expected to resume next week, according to Senate President Juan Ponce-Enrile.

Enrile said Sen. Ana Maria Consuelo "Jamby" Madrigal, who filed the complaint against Villar, requested for time to gather her evidence in behalf of the Senate acting as a committee of the whole on Aug. 6.

Madrigal alleged that Villar was behind the double-handing and diversion of the C5 Road extension to benefit his real estate interests in Davao del Sur and Las Piñas cities.

She is expected to call at least 23 witnesses for the investigation that started last month but was suspended when Congress went on recess.

Jamby's evidence

Madrigal's witnesses include 108 documents and exhibits, but the senator said she was prepared to submit 163 more documents and exhibits next week.

With Congress resuming its sessions, Enrile said the Senate committee to voted up the ethics case against Villar soon, although he said he did not know how long the investigation will last.

"It depends on the evidence Jamby will present," he said during a dinner with local reporters in Malacañang on Wednesday.

But Enrile expressed hope the committee would be able to finish the hearings soon since the Senate would still have to tackle the proposed 2010 national budget before the political season begins in November.

Villar has repeatedly denied the allegations against him, saying there was no anomaly because Madrigal was talking about two different road projects.

The senator added that he was now the subject of attacks because he is running for president in next year's elections.

Ahead, but...

Enrile reminded that Villar was way ahead in recent surveys of presidential candidates.

But his popularity ratings could eventually be "equaled" or even be overtaken by other strong contenders, the Senate President said.

Pointing out that Villar appears in some 200 television and radio spots every week, Enrile said that the senator's popularity ranking at 37 percent. "But first 17 per cent has not moved. If it moves, it was very little, upwards. That is the extent of his popular support," he said.

"So given the time available to campaign, it's not [believed to be] he could be equaled or overtaken," he added.

Enrile said some of the potential presidential candidates were "fooling up" in the ratings, citing the case of Sen. Francis "Chiz" Escudero, with 15 percent. "And yet Chiz doesn't have the kind of money Manny uses to make himself popular," he said. Escudero, he noted, has been attracting the youth sector.

Still, it was too early to make any predictions, said Enrile.

"There surveys are public opinions," he said. "Perceptions, at a given time, can change. "It's like ice cream. It can solidify ... or it can melt away."

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DENR urged to ban thin, single-use plastic bags

ENVIRONMENTALISTS YESTERday urged the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to immediately ban thin, single-use plastic bags to save the ocean from pollution, as proposed by the National Solid Waste Management Commission (NSWMC).

It stood by Environment Secretary and NSWMC Chairman Antonio Rendeloro: "If, because of 2009 will immediately ban the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of thin film, single-use plastic bags.

This kind of plastic bag, one of the most popularly used, was "killing marine animals and declaring coastal areas across the globe," said the EcoWaste Coalition, a waste and pollution watchdog, and the Canseve and Protect Oceans Foundation (CAPO Ocean), a marine rehabilitation and protection group.

"We urge Secretary Atienza to uphold public interest and back the policy resolution that could dramatically reduce the huge quantities of plastic discards being disposed in dumpsites and in water bodies. Let the ban on plastic bags be his legacy as environmental chief," said Roy Alvarez of the EcoWaste Coalition.

The ban was essential "to stop the destructive disposal at sea or on open land of discarded plastic bags and other garbage. We all need to take action to protect the marine ecosystem from plastic pollution," said Jessie de los Reyes, the CAPO Ocean project coordinator. Alexis Hipos

Customs brokers, truckers strike over port abuses

By Kristine L. Alave

CUSTOMS TRUCKERS AND brokers began yesterday a nationwide strike to denounce alleged abuses by the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG).

Agapito Mendez Jr., leader of the Professional Customs Brokers Association of the Philippines, said in an interview that at least 4,000 customs brokers and truckers supported the mass action.

The strike, Mendez said, has affected 16 ports nationwide and would last until the "PASG is dissolved or [its] chief dismissed Villar steps down."

Hijacked

Their call, he said, was echoed by other port worker groups like the Alliance of Concerned Truck Owners and Organizations, Alyansa Agad Samahang Pwersanaryo Pwersanaryo, Fruit Importer-Brokers Association Inc., National Confederation of Customs Brokers of the Philippines, and the Visayas-Mindanao Customs Brokers Association Inc.

The PASG, Mendez charged, "hijacked" their trucks and cargoes, detaining them in violation of "consent" that occurs at P10,000 for a 20-foot container.

In cahoots with smugglers

"The PASG is not the anti-smuggling group anymore, it has become the Presidential Also Sayyaf Group," he said, referring to the Muslim-based terror group that kidnaps civilians for ransom.

Villar, for his part, called the allegations "an agents declared cargoes for cash."

He accused Mendez and his group of being in cahoots with smugglers, saying they were the ones who violated customs laws.

Mendez, he said, had even been suspended for illegally diverting goods.

"They are the ones who are underpaying their taxes. They're doing that because they want to stop us from inspecting their cargoes, that [is] their motive," Villar said.

He also belittled the strike, noting that only a few customs brokers and truckers supported it.

"There is no strike," he said.

Drop in traffic

Mendez said the movement of imported goods at 16 ports had stopped beginning yesterday. He said only truckers and brokers servicing export products were allowed to work.

Reports from the regional customs police to Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said there had been a "significant" drop in import traffic and transactions.

The reports said the Manila International Container Port and the Manila Harbor were "paralyzed." There were also a drop in transactions in the ports of Cebu and Davao, the customs police said.

Work stoppage

The work stoppage, Mendez said, is expected to cost the government P200 million a day in lost collections.

The port workers in a statement said PASG agents do not have written orders or warrants when they inspect their warehouses and trucks. The PASG also uses unmarked vehicles and brings along armed troops during their raids, they said.

"The PASG apprehending elements point to higher officials for their unlawful actions, yet said officials are not even present in their offices," the statement said.

Marinduque free of NPA—military

THE MILITARY YESTERDAY DECLARED Marinduque finally free of the presence of New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas, adding that the police and local government would start taking care of the island province's internal security beginning today.

Three other provinces are also set to be shortly declared free from the NPA, according to Lt. Gen. Roland Durosoli, chief of the Southern Luzon Command.

He pointed out that the developments indicated that the military was right on schedule in achieving its target of ending the communist insurgency by 2010.

"Romblon became NPA-presence-already while just a few communist insurgents operate in Laguna and Cavite," Durosoli told reporters yesterday.

He said that Marinduque was the first province in the country to be given back the responsibility of taking care of its internal security.

Durosoli said that the Armed Forces of the Philippines had noted a decline in NPA activities in Marinduque over the past few years, manifesting last year, as measured by the group had been monitored at all, he added.

According to AFP spokesperson Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., only one guerrilla front, the Romulong Lawagan Guerilla, operated in Marinduque as compared to its neighbors Quezon and Masbate, considered hotbeds for guerrilla activities.

An operation operation will take place in Barangay Tapo in Boac today, to be attended by top brass of the AFP and the Philippine National Police and leaders of civil society groups, according to Pfcl Lt. Edwin Wade Ingosan, spokesperson of the 2nd Infantry Division.

Since the police would already handle peace and order duties in the province, Durosoli said, military troops deployed in Marinduque might be pulled out soon. However military men numbering more than 90 would stay in place to support police operations.

"We are on track of defeating the NPA by next year but the Bicol region and Eastern Samar to be our problems. But we still be able to accomplish our mission in 10 to 11 months," he said. He put the NPA strength in Southern Luzon at around 750 members. Jocelyn R. Ey

DepEd seeks to boost EQ of students in public schools

By Philip C. Tubeza

SEEKING TRENDS TO HONE UP the emotional skills of Filipino students, the Department of Education is embarking on a program to improve the emotional quotient (EQ) of public school pupils.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said the DepEd was "mere enriching" the elementary school curriculum with the integration of social studies and history (SHE) to Enrichment Education (Edukasyong Pantasa) subjects.

The program is aimed at helping the pupils develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making, he said.

Refinement in education

"These skills are expected to facilitate academic achievement and develop well-rounded, wholesome individuals," Lapus said in a statement.

"Developing lifelong learners in a fast-changing world calls for continuous refinement in education," he added.

Lapus said the elementary school curriculum will also strengthen appreciation and love of cultural heritage "while learning will be made more interactive and experiential" with the help of information communication technology (ICT).

The inclusion of HIL in the elementary curriculum is aligned with the Education for All (EFA) thrust which aims to upgrade the quality of basic education by 2015, he said.

The guidelines on HIL and the teaching of Edukasyong Pagpapakatao at Sibika at Kultura (Values Education and values education, civics and culture/geography, history and civics) that focus on demonstrating nationalism and love of cultural heritage are contained in DepEd Order No. 51, series of 2009.

Lapus said there will be more to can on local songs, folk dances, poems, folklore literature, customs and traditions that enrich Filipino culture.

Talk less, learn more

The guidelines also stipulated that the national anthem (Lupang Hinirang) be sung properly following the 2/4 time signature in 57 seconds, he said.

Moreover, the memo also prescribes that the prevailing practice in classroom instruction should be "Talk Less and Learn More."

This can be attained through "experiential, interactive, and cooperative learning and utilization of the ICT mode of instruction," Lapus said.

He said that room teaching for Grades 1 to 3 and 4 to 6 will be encouraged, utilizing the skills of teachers with expertise in the learning areas concerned. The designation of team leaders will also be done to ensure learning and scholarship programs.

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OPINION

Send it back

EDITORIAL

LAST MONDAY, THE COUNTRY HEARD A WHOLE slew of messages from Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo. The Judicial and Bar Council received its useful.

On that day, the JBC, the constitutional agency mandated to recommend appointees to the judiciary, received a letter from Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, explaining why the President was returning in short list of six nominees for two Supreme Court vacancies. "Considering the importance and far-reaching consequences of the appointments of the two positions, the President cannot be too careful about the selection and appointment of the associate justices," Ermita wrote. "It is respectfully submitted that the two positions deserve a wider array of nominees to be submitted for the President's consideration."

This is nothing but bureaucratic code for: "The persons we want to appoint, you did not recommend. We want you reconsider your position and you recommend those persons we want to appoint."

The two vacancies were created with the retirement of Justice Dante Tinga and the resignation of Justice Alicia Austria-Martinez. The JBC, an eight-member board with the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court as ex officio chairman, had recommended six lawyers of wide reputation to the President: Court of Appeals Justice Martin Villarama, Sandiganbayan Justice Francisco Villaruz, Ombudsman Ret. Justice Jose Vitug, law school dean Roberto Abad, CA Justice Hakim Abdulwahid, CA Justice Mariano del Castillo and Rachelle Rebles. In doing so, the JBC faithfully complied with its mandate, as spelled out in Article VIII, Section 9: "The members of the Supreme Court and judges of the lower courts shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the Judicial and Bar Council for every vacancy."

The JBC did not only meet the letter of the law; it followed its very spirit. The council is an innovation of the 1986 Constitutional Commission, a representative institution "under the supervision of the Supreme Court," designed to prevent the politicization of the appointments process that had taken place under the previous constitutions. While it must be admitted that the JBC has not completely vanquished the ghost of politics past, it has enough safeguards to prevent an over assertive executive from packing the country's courts with political yes-men and -women.

The notion that the President can ask JBC members to draw up a short list again and again until they get it right—that is, until they recommend a person the President herself favors—goes against the spirit of the constitutional innovation that is the JBC. It negates the JBC's independent role of evaluation and recommendation.

"Considering the importance and far-reaching consequences of the appointments," What does this mean but that Presidents Arroyo wants to substitute her judgment for the JBC's? "The two positions deserve a wider array of nominees." What does this mean but that Presidents Arroyo rejects the results of the JBC's own process of deliberation?

It is worth noting that the President is represented on the council by at least two ex officio members: the secretary of justice and the representative of the House of Representatives, which in our history is always run by a majority backed by the incumbent president. What, then, does "the President cannot be too careful about the selections" mean but that Ms Arroyo wants to use by executive fiat what her representatives on the council lose by vote?

The JBC, as envisioned by the Constitution's framers, represents both the collective wisdom of the legal profession as far as prospective appointments are concerned, and a strict limitation on the President's appointing power. The chief executive—precisely because the Constitution confines he or she may not be a lawyer—is limited to choosing from among the JBC's recommendees. That is how the system is supposed to work.

Ermita's letter, and thus the President's implied demand, constitutes an assault on the principle behind the JBC's unique mandate. The members of the JBC should send that last and send the same short list of nominees back to Malacañang, again and again, until the President, after she recovers from her Beirut-Ottawa hangover, sees the constitutional light.

Cheaper, faster alternative to Laiban Dam

THERE IS A CHEAPER AND FASTER ALTERNATIVE to the P56 billion Laiban Dam, according to a builder who was a partner in the construction of the Cotabato Dike in Maguindanao. That is the Nilwa Dam, in nearby Montalban, according to Oscar Hidalgo, president of Nic Lorenzo Pub Builders and Developers Consortium Inc.

In a letter to Administrator Rodolfo Ian M. Alfafara of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), Hidalgo enumerated the advantages of Nilwa Dam over Laiban. (Nilwa cannot be for the main source of power for Manila. When Angat Dam was built, it was decommissioned for its reservoir is still full and does not the millions of gallons of water go over the dam and flows out to sea. Hidalgo proposes to increase this water to supplement Metro Manila's water supply.) I got a copy of Hidalgo's letter to Alfafara, which is self-explanatory. Here it is:

The subject of this letter introduces the offer of Nic Miguel for the Laiban water project. We have raised the issue before, during our offer for the allotted period for a Swiss challenge to the offer of NIBC.

Because we have been unable to bridge our differences, the offer by Metro Manila Builders Consortium for the audit of phase by three despite the swallow of waters.

My company, San Lorenzo Pub Builders, has an MOU with MWSS signed by former Administrator Orly Orbe on January 6, 2004 [sic] and submitted a project study and have secured the Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). We have arisen from MWSS' purchase order to proceed with water delivery.

San Lorenzo Pub Builders owns the water rights to the Nilwa River Dam project, which has the optimal opportunity to deliver water by gravity to Antipolo, Montalban, San Mateo, Marikina, MWSS' Putatan Treatment Plant (the Nilwa Dam is short, to the entire Metro Manila) area.

2. Nilwa Dam's watershed area of 23,700 hectares is almost the same size as Laiban Dam's watershed area of 28,000 hectares. Thus, its water production should be almost equal to Laiban Dam. However, unlike Laiban Dam's water, the Angkon reservoirs will have to cover for them in case of water inconsistency.

3. The federal and Bar Council must not involve President Macapagal-Arroyo by recommending the names up to "short-list" of nominees to the Supreme Court. The JBC has already discharged its constitutional function. To allow the President to exercise appointing power is to allow the executive branch to violate the principle of separation of powers in checking powers in an independent body.

The Constitution says that SC justices "shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the [JBC]." This was designed to insulate judicial appointments from politics by allowing an appointing body to vet candidates and confine the President's discretion to the JBC's nominees. In this case the JBC is one such nominee from politics, for the President returning a JBC short-list is a decision to some how attempt to circumvent the Constitution.

The power to "short-list" is part of Laiban checks and balances. Ms Arroyo has returned the short-list before, but just JBC's have always stood firm and consistently rebuffed her. Published speculations are out that the Malacañang returned the JBC list to force Solicitor General and Acting Secretary of Justice Agnes Devanadera, since I understand she not interested in the second nomination and is eyeing Bernard Contawi that will save in November. After then is the next vacated one, the "nominee guy" done enough to Mr. Arroyo to finagle the backdoor and politically embarrassing move by Malacañang?

On Wednesday this week, Prof. Harry Roque argued before the Supreme Court for over three years of Pdl cases, and delivery dates of 10 to 11 years. The assemble was fully explained and supported in the studies done by three International consortium agents (JICA), National Power Corporation Angat (NPC), National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Wigmo Asia Co., Ltd., KBR Consultants, recommendation study, and with the participation of MWSS, Metro, DPWH, NWB, DEG and SRA in February, 2006.

3. No national security reasons. Where Dam is the former and immediate solution to ensure Metro Manila's continuing water supply (August Nilwa Dam will supply 93 percent of Metro Manila's water, has critical leakages, needs immediate repairs and serves a major earthquake faultline.) There is a great risk that Laiban Dam may not be developed in time, as out of all close to its feasibility requirements and needs challenges on environmental abuse. Thus, for MWSS not to consider Nilwa Dam first could put Metro Manila's economy into national economic in great economic jeopardy.

4. The advantages of our source and solutions are:

a. Savings for MWSS and users especially MWSS operational pumping costs.

b. Avoids building expensive pumping stations.

c. Delivers dissolved water to their consumers on a 24/7 basis at the cheapest price possible.

d. Nilwa Dam needs only a minor renovation to make it operational again within eight months. It is easy to revive its existing right-of-way and pipelines going to MWSS's Balara filtration plant in La Mesa Dam, where both MWSS and MWSI can obtain their water requirements.

e. Nilwa Dam can supply water to consumers in MWSI in Antipolo at five to seven times lower than MWSI's present operational costs. Moreover, MWSI will not only use pumping station instead of the three being used by MWSI more can delivered by gravity to Antipolo's higher and 24 hours delivery (versus MWSI's delivery point is future to Antipolo.)

f. Original main source supply of 880 to Manila for 60 years from 1960 until August 2006 was [illegible] to its watershed area of 23 thousand hectares (La Mesa Dam's watershed area of [illegible] hectares.

(To be continued)

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

a. It does not need a cost item. $2 billion government guarantee with a minimum rate or you.

b. It can be built on diapered loan is needed only by MWSI and MWSI.

c. It does not need 39 km of tunneling, in sight of way problem and no highways.

d. It is only 4 km to Montalban town proper; 11 km by pipelines to MCWD's Bulacan treatment plant and 20 km by pipelines to MWSI's Balara treatment plant (Laiban's Pilipinas is 80Km).

e. 20 million affected by lahar evacuations and around 27,000 hectares of non-irrigated agricultural lands.

f. It does not have 3,000 families which may have already increased to 10,000 families to re-possess with, relocate and displace. It will impede certain thousands of employment and billions of pesos in the form of taxes for Montalban, Antipolo and in the entire province of Rizal.

g. It can deliver 500 MW to 600 MW of power and not only 20 MW of power. Therefore, Meralco has shown interest to purchase power from NIBR because it is within its franchise area and therefore it does not have to pay billions of pesos in wheeling fees to Transco.

h. Laiban Dam's proposed downstream site is too close, Antipolo, Rizal, has the challenge of thousands of informal settlers to uproot. The entire debris coming down from their schools and livelihood. Moreover, the site is not ready accessible for construction and development. The presence in the area will bring about the further devastation of the huge Sierra Dam's watershed, aggravating further the flooding in Metro Manila. On the other hand, Nilwa Dam's swell-surrounded environment is greatly protected from water flooding in Metro Manila at no cost to the national government.

i. It is my view that Laiban Dam's project

An 'exposure trip' with NPA rebels?

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

EVEN IF THE HEROES WERE AUTHENtic—showing someone responsible for Melissa Roxas is the conquest of following rebels—there is absolutely no excuse, or justification, for former Tarlac governor Jose Yap's violation of law.

Authentic, it troubles me that rebel sympathizers appear to entice young activists to expose themselves to physical danger by going on "immersion" trips to liberated areas.

Under human rights law, the right not to be tortured is "non-derogable," meaning a right that prevails in any situation. Under humanitarian law governing armed conflict, "protected persons" in the language of the Geneva Conventions (whose anniversary we celebrate on Aug. 12)—and that international protection extends even to domestic insurgencies. Rules plus that this is a many activist, not to understand is not merely moral distinction. As such, the former are part of natural hostilities and is not civilians except of hostile operations.

Military spokesmen have frowned the argument and apparently used the video news item by the rebels that merely to point to other) rampant, but so to the testimony of Melissa, has been credible—down to the fact that the book (Gabriel Garcia Marquez's "Love in the Time of Cholera") given her by her captors was issued to a bookstore in Colombian. The narrative drew four literary nods, but hey, even the Nazis could have secured library.

On the other hand, if indeed it was shown the video, then, it appears to be another exposure trip to educate urban activists about the (famous revolution. As a parent and as a teacher, I worry that they are engaging in the school of self-reduction, risking life and limb in exchange for the romantic thrill of mingling with armed rebels in the countryside. At the University of the Philippines where I teach, I understand that some students are encouraged, if not required, by their professors to go on these "exposure trips" to "real" areas. There exist eye-catchy slides from Manila may relish the thought of choosing "the road not taken," but it may turn out to be the end of the road for them and, worse, the hapless comrades who have to come for them in case of armed encounters.

The federal and Bar Council must not involve President Macapagal-Arroyo by recommending the names up to "short-list" of nominees to the Supreme Court. The JBC has already discharged its constitutional function. To allow the President to exercise appointing power is to allow the executive branch to violate the principle of separation of powers in checking powers in an independent body.

The Constitution says that SC justices "shall be appointed by the President from a list of at least three nominees prepared by the [JBC]." This was designed to insulate judicial appointments from politics by allowing an appointing body to vet candidates and confine the President's discretion to the JBC's nominees. In this case the JBC is one such nominee from politics, for the President returning a JBC short-list is a decision to some how attempt to circumvent the Constitution.

The power to "short-list" is part of Laiban checks and balances. Ms Arroyo has returned the short-list before, but just JBC's have always stood firm and consistently rebuffed her. Published speculations are out that the Malacañang returned the JBC list to force Solicitor General and Acting Secretary of Justice Agnes Devanadera, since I understand she not interested in the second nomination and is eyeing Bernard Contawi that will save in November. After then is the next vacated one, the "nominee guy" done enough to Mr. Arroyo to finagle the backdoor and politically embarrassing move by Malacañang?

On Wednesday this week, Prof. Harry Roque argued before the Supreme Court for over three years of Pdl cases, and delivery dates of 10 to 11 years. The assemble was fully explained and supported in the studies done by three International consortium agents (JICA), National Power Corporation Angat (NPC), National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Wigmo Asia Co., Ltd., KBR Consultants, recommendation study, and with the participation of MWSS, Metro, DPWH, NWB, DEG and SRA in February, 2006.

3. No national security reasons. Where Dam is the former and immediate solution to ensure Metro Manila's continuing water supply (August Nilwa Dam will supply 93 percent of Metro Manila's water, has critical leakages, needs immediate repairs and serves a major earthquake faultline.) There is a great risk that Laiban Dam may not be developed in time, as out of all close to its feasibility requirements and needs challenges on environmental abuse. Thus, for MWSS not to consider Nilwa Dam first could put Metro Manila's economy into national economic in great economic jeopardy.

4. The advantages of our source and solutions are:

a. Savings for MWSS and users especially MWSI operational pumping costs.

b. Avoids building expensive pumping stations.

c. Delivers dissolved water to their consumers on a 24/7 basis at the cheapest price possible.

d. Nilwa Dam needs only a minor renovation to make it operational again within eight months. It is easy to revive its existing right-of-way and pipelines going to MWSI's Balara filtration plant in La Mesa Dam, where both MWSI and MWSI can obtain their water requirements.

e. Nilwa Dam can supply water to consumers in MWSI in Antipolo at five to seven times lower than MWSI's present operational costs. Moreover, MWSI will not only use pumping station instead of the three being used by MWSI more can delivered by gravity to Antipolo's higher and 24 hours delivery (versus MWSI's delivery point is future to Antipolo.)

f. Original main source supply of 880 to Manila for 60 years from 1960 until August 2006 was [illegible] to its watershed area of 23 thousand hectares (La Mesa Dam's watershed area of [illegible] hectares.

(To be continued)

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

a. It does not need a cost item. $2 billion government guarantee with a minimum rate or you.

b. It can be built on diapered loan is needed only by MWSI and MWSI.

c. It does not need 39 km of tunneling, in sight of way problem and no highways.

d. It is only 4 km to Montalban town proper; 11 km by pipelines to MCWD's Bulacan treatment plant and 20 km by pipelines to MWSI's Balara treatment plant (Laiban's Pilipinas is 80Km).

e. 20 million affected by lahar evacuations and around 27,000 hectares of non-irrigated agricultural lands.

f. It does not have 3,000 families which may have already increased to 10,000 families to re-possess with, relocate and displace. It will impede certain thousands of employment and billions of pesos in the form of taxes for Montalban, Antipolo and in the entire province of Rizal.

g. It can deliver 500 MW to 600 MW of power and not only 20 MW of power. Therefore, Meralco has shown interest to purchase power from NIBR because it is within its franchise area and therefore it does not have to pay billions of pesos in wheeling fees to Transco.

h. Laiban Dam's proposed downstream site is too close, Antipolo, Rizal, has the challenge of thousands of informal settlers to uproot. The entire debris coming down from their schools and livelihood. Moreover, the site is not ready accessible for construction and development. The presence in the area will bring about the further devastation of the huge Sierra Dam's watershed, aggravating further the flooding in Metro Manila. On the other hand, Nilwa Dam's swell-surrounded environment is greatly protected from water flooding in Metro Manila at no cost to the national government.

i. It is my view that Laiban Dam's project

'Encased in such beauty as to stop the heart'

The British Foreign Office has a longstanding tradition that its ambassadors send a final dispatch to ministers before leaving the country where they served. This is yet another version of my report this month to London, where I return to work in our head office in September.

THE PHILIPPINES AND BRUNEI HAVE BEEN, for its shoulder on many of the big strategic issues we face. Among the most important are climate change and building peace across religious and cultural divides. As President Macapagal-Arroyo noted when I called on her this month, global warming is going to have a substantial impact on your country. The Asian Development Bank's review report on Southeast Asia spelt out the consequences bluntly. It makes chilling reading, with warnings of major landslides and flooding. Our government looks forward to discussing with President Arroyo in September in London how the Philippines can develop a leading role in international negotiations and adopt a low carbon development framework.

Last month a delegation from the Most Liberal Liberation Front visited Belfast and London to see for themselves how the Northern Ireland peace process was making a difference. Certainly it was not a unanimous. The greatest message from Northern Ireland is that there can be a solution, although it is difficult, takes time, and there are setbacks along the way. We are willing to continue to work alongside the Philippine government, the MILF and the Mindanao Peoples Peace Panel to help bring peace to Muslim Mindanao. Like climate change, the consequences of doing nothing could be enormous. The recent bombings in Jakarta are a reminder of the continued threat of violent extremism in Southeast Asia.

We also share other common aims regionally. Prime Minister Gordon Brown wrote to President Arroyo recently noting her strong and robust statements about the current regime in Burma, and their continued detention of political prisoners. On a brighter note we also welcome the Philippines support for a Free Trade Agreement between Asean and the European Union, which could boost substantially two-way trade and investment.

Socio-Economic

The last few years have seen a major growth in British investment in the Philippines. It is no coincidence that within the last few months the heads of three of Britain's largest companies, Barclays, Glaxo-SmithKline and HSBC, have all visited Manila and talked about significant new investments, in addition to their already substantial businesses. There are many CEOs visiting later this year. We predict that investment flows will continue to increase, especially in the booming BPO sector, as will the numbers of OFWs looking to work in the UK and adding to the 1.4 million already there. The British Philippines community expresses with its kindness and hospitality, hard work and discipline. The presence in the river runs into the UK will increase if the birth rate continues inexorably to push the Philippine population towards 150 million by the middle of the century.

Political

Like the parliaments and birth control measures, Philippine politics are not for the to debate, but we still of course watch the elections new year with great interest. I have had the opportunity to meet all the likely candidates, and I am delighted that a number have strong personal or business links to the UK.

In the meantime we look forward to welcoming President Arroyo to London again in September when she addresses us the annual Intelligence Conference, means top UK businesspeople and, we hope, discuss some of the issues I have highlighted with our new Prime Minister and other ministers. The groundwork was laid this month in London when we held the inaugural UK/Philippine Senior Official Talks. The discussions were positive, included proposals for an extradition treaty, and will be continued in Manila next year.

We have been free if any differences of opinion, and desire for more to compare than many of our close friends, with the largest number of OFWs in Europe living in the UK, the biggest flows of Remittances coming from Britain, and a range of shared strategic interests.

Personal farewell

It is difficult to complete in a country more welcoming to a foreign diplomat than the Philippines. Government leaders and opposition leaders have opened their doors to me and to many visitors from London, former Prime Minister Tony Blair, the Lord Mayor of London, the Duke of York, government ministers, senior trade union leaders, the Irish Republican Army and numerous business leaders have all been granted audience. The welcome extends at all levels of society. My wife has trumped fearlessly the paths of Smokey Mountain in pursuit of the rare silver duck, the analogy MGD sent us open to January.

In addition to more normal events, we are blessed with some of the most stunning natural wonders, from the rice terraces to the limestone cliffs of El Nido. I expect many more visitors from Britain to seek out these last paradises on earth as word gets out. I will be leaving the shores for the Philippines, and will be among those returning to your wonderful country.

To paraphrase James Hamilton-Paterson, one of a number of British authors who have become enthralled with the Philippines, "the whole country is encased in such beauty, such affection and cool as to stop the heart."

Peter Buckingham is the British ambassador to the Philippines

'GMA insults the Supreme Court'

THE PRESIDENT HAS THIS HABIT OF LIVING up to people's worst fears.

Early this year, opposition groups and critics warned of the need for vigilance especially in the matter of presidential appointments since the President was in a position to stack the deck. The key government agencies with people of her own choosing who would do her bidding, turning them squarely into the constitutional bodies: the Civil Service Commission and the Commission on Audit, and the Supreme Court. The last is supposedly the crucial since it's supposed to be an independent and co-equal branch of government, the "last resort," in fact to keep in check excesses of the executive and legislative branches. Also, the number of appointees to the Court is big enough to significantly affect the President – who is the final appointing authority – an end up with a Supreme Court completely friendly up of her appointees.

Given that a number of constitutional challenges are expected to be brought to the attention of the Supreme Court, Cha cha being only one of them, whatever deems the composition of the Court of crucial importance. Apart from the individual character and integrity of each justice, one factor is the political leanings of the majority – the decision would be a process of enacting and choosing the nominees that to show partisan considerations, unadorned as full transparency and subject to public accountability.

The last few appointees to the Supreme Court seem to have made it to the tribunal without too much controversy or opposition and no dark skeletons in closets.

Given the whole round of appointments, after keeping a careful hands-off approach in recent months, Malacañang, it seems, has decided to show its hand and lean latent when it comes to completing the line-up of appointees to the Supreme Court.

* * *

SIGNS is that the President has rejected the latest list of six nominees submitted to her by the Judicial and Bar Council, which is charged with preparing the short list of nominees for the Supreme Court and is composed of representa-

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

tives of the Court, the Senate and House, and the private legal sector. Two of the six nominees are in fill the vacancies created by the retirement of former Justices Dante Tinga and Minita Vera Cruz Martinez.

The city survived a stringent process of background checks, verifications and even interviews that was matched closely by legal groups as well as by civil society. All those in an effort to make sure that only the most qualified, with unassailable reputations, would come to the President for consideration.

No wonder former Senate President Pinth Ponce, who used to sit in the JBC, chastised Ateneo Malacañang's action in rejecting the JBC list as an attempt to undermine the independence of the judiciary.

Ponce called on Chief Justice Reynato Puno and the other members of the JBC "to stand their ground" and insist that the President choose the new appointees from its list, as provided for in the Constitution.

By rejecting the JBC nominees, Ponce said the President "betrayed her propensity to disregard the Constitution and the rule of law in order to pack the Supreme Court with her political allies."

"This patently illegal action by the President only reinforces speculations that Malacañang wants a subservient Supreme Court that will unabashedly condone the chicanery and deceit of her grand designs to stay in power after her term as president expires next year," Ponce added.

* * *

LAST Tuesday, a day after delivering her "judicial" State of the Nation Address, the President returned the list of six nominees submitted by the JBC. In a letter, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita asked for more names on top of the six named by the JBC, indicating her dissatisfaction with the six the JBC deemed worthy for her consideration. A member of the council took exception to Malacañang's move, saying it was tantamount to a rejection of the council's choice despite its constitutional mandate to screen applicants and nominate them to the President.

The JBC has a constitutional stress this to no less than "an insult to the Supreme Court" that "undermines the independence of the judiciary."

Meanwhile, Supreme Court Appointments Watch, someone and Transparency and Accountability Network, or TAN, and the Philippine Bar Association, the Malacañang letter showed a lack of respect for the JBC and its ability to screen candidates. "It also exposes her (President Arroyo) to accusations that she wants a compliant Supreme Court," Lacsina said, and if she indeed wants to "help the courts right, it also amounts to a colossal waste of time and government resources.

* * *

ALL I can say is all who are eager in this current flap is that we saw it coming all along. Only the latest initiative – and the most blatant in the President's usual initiative – would have actually believed that she could resist the temptation to stuff the Supreme Court with men and women of her own choosing. Only Manila is Zumbo-dense, and who would be so grateful for their appointment to the Court that they could be relied upon to do her bidding and rule according to what they perceive would be her wishes.

Of course, it's a tribute to the six on the JBC list that none of them were considered "worthy" enough of the President's blessings – that is, worthy enough of being deemed partners willing to do the President Arroyo's bidding.

As I said earlier, the President has a way of living up to our worst expectations. The real wonder is why we still get so angry and disappointed given past experience, and what we already know of her governance style and sense of ethical behavior.

A flunker and saint

THERE ARE TWO SMALL BOOKS I READ EACH year in July. The first is part of Gregory the Great's "Dialogues" on the life and miracles of Benedict of Nursia, a saint whose death is commemorated on July 11. The second book is an account of the life of Ignatius Loyola as told to Luis Gonzalez de Camara. This saint is commemorated on July 31.

Since I was educated in the Ateneo de Manila from early grade school (I was 11 years old at the third of my life), people presumed that either I turned to religious life I would become a saint. However, to everyone's surprise I entered the Benedictine Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat in Manila and spent about the happy years there following the rule of St. Benedict. Only last month I left work. Such was, on July 11, I continue to celebrate my feast day for I was once known as Brother Ignatius Maria, OSB.

One of the wonderful things about monastic life is that you are given a new name, and instead of your baptismal you celebrate the feast of your patron saint. In one monastery we presented the abbot with two names of our choice and he made the final decision, being a historian, I was inclined to choose a saint who was also a historian, one of them an English Benedictine nun known as the Venerable Bede. Others, however, not intimately already had Dom. Basil Hurbenwen, also Benedictine, told me. I argued that we could have two Bedes in the monastery, the one who used the English form of the name Bede, while I took the Latin form Beda or the Spanish form Beda. Such, which happens to be the name of the patron saint of the Benedictines in Manila and Montserrat, So this.

My next choice was Wilfrid or Wilfrido, yet another English Benedictine name. I wanted this name because I was inspired by Wilfrido Ruiz, a Spanish abbot of the Manila abbey who had retired to one of the monasteries in Spain. I met him in his old age when he had mellowed and became wise, an image that did not coincide with the memories of older monks in Manila who knew him

LOOKING BACK

Anthony K. Cesar

as a stern ascetic who carried life into prisoner.

Finally, I chose Ignatius for the founder of the Jesuits, Ignatius de Loyola, and this caused some surprises. Why pick a Jesuit name when there were over 1,000 Benedictine saints to choose from? Why not take the name of Ignatius of Antioch? What the monks in charge of my training did not realize was that you can take a boy out of the streets de Manila, but you still never get Ateneo out of the boy.

When asked to give one good reason for my choice of a Jesuit patron saint, my simple reply was that Ignatius Loyola was converted in the great Benedictine Abbey of Montserrat outside Barcelona and, as a matter of fact, he left his sword there as an offering to the image of Our Lady on offering of himself and the shedding of his worldly life.

I entered a Benedictine abbey in Manila founded from the original one in Montserrat, and I was there for five years, but after my last example, I doubt very much if abbots would allow another young novice to take a Jesuit name, much less Ignatius de Loyola whose reputation I have just begun tarnished in the Manila abbey.

My novice master, the late Fr. Roberto de Jesus, OSB, responded to my choice of name with his dry humor and said, "As a Benedictine you chose the same Ignatius. I am sure that if you had become a Jesuit you would have chosen the Benedictine name, you would have chosen to be Benedict, Bruno or Benito."

Ignatius are better known in the Philippines for the Ateneo de Manila University, founded in 1859 after they returned from exile. There are other Jesuit institutions, notably Manila, Xavier University and Naga, and then there are other Jesuit schools like Xavier School in Greenhills and Claver University in Cagayan de Oro. And today is a holiday in all these Jesuit run institutions.

The names of these schools may explain why many students think that the founder of the Jesuits as they should. During a session in the Ateneo High School, one of my classmates pointed to a picture of Ignatius on the wall and exclaimed, "Pare, 15 years tapos nag-aral dito, pero sino ba yan?" (Pare those were First Graduation Bible Reading) Another classmate, Ricky Belgica of Sagada during the President's working visit to Spain in 2005. When he saw the crest of the house of Loyola, he recognized the sculpted and the striped shield and asked, "What is that doing here? Isn't that the seal of the Ateneo?"

During the President's visit I was sent to Spain, she was conferred the Medalla de Oro (gold medal) by the University of Alcala in recognition of her abolition of the death penalty in the Philippines. She gave a speech in a gilded palace, and while this was going on, I was direct two doors in the Alcala University Library and found a copy of the constitution that she had signed in 2005. When he saw the crest of the house of Loyola, he recognized the sculpted and the striped shield and asked, "What is that doing here? Isn't that the seal of the Ateneo?"

First language

FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY NOW, FILIPINOS HAVE HAD to suffer the consequences of ideologically tainted policies concerning the language of instruction in our schools.

The Americans imposed English as part of its strategic or "benevolent assimilation" and English was the only language used in schools up until 1934, several years after an organized independence. Local languages were even banned in schools during the American colonial period and it spread well into independence.

Because of high drop-out rates and the poor quality of teaching – English proficiency in the language was never really achieved. The upper classes, exposed to more years of English in schools, could end up quoting Shakespeare while the poor acquired basic English mainly to follow orders from their employers.

In 1974, the Department of Education instituted a bilingual policy, using English and a loosely Tagalog-based Filipino. Local languages were considered "auxiliary" or "transitional," allowed in schools in the early grades.

Calls to return to English, to improve the export potentials of Filipinos, have been heard in the last few years, and there is a bill pending in Congress to make English compulsory in schools. President Macapagal-Arroyo backed, in 2003, issued an order for English to be used in schools. Several schools, including state universities and colleges, have already started to implement this policy, with signs on campuses, "Use our English, please."

For some Freudian reason, such signs always get me thinking of those wonderful Tagalog English-read signs: "Caution: Accident Prone Area." To be blunt, the "English only campus" has been tried in many times and as a victim of such a policy—my grade school days were spent in a school with strict English-only rules. Obscene students who were caught using non-speaking English, and rewarded for snitching on classmates who broke the rule—I can tell you this English only campaign did little to enhance proficiency. Not only that, it handicapped our graduates, myself included, by reducing our proficiency to the forbidden languages, Filipino and Chinese, and hobbling our ability to communicate with fellow Filipinos and with the Chinese.

I see hope now for pulling out of the linguistic quagmire we got ourselves into. Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus has issued an administrative order requiring the use of the mother tongue (or first language, for which I'll be using the abbreviation L1) in schools.

Research

L1 is the main language used in the area. (The Department order doesn't state though what geographical definitions will be used—the town, province or region—and that will be an important issue to consider.) Specifically, the order requires that the mother tongue be used as the primary language of instruction from Kindergarten to Grade 3. The next grades 3 to 6, the mother tongue is to be used to teach other languages, including English and Filipino, as well as science and math.

The order comes after long and sometimes emotional debates over language policy, including several columns in the Inquirer's op-ed pages. The Department says that new policy comes after research has proven the following:

1. Students learn to read more quickly in L1. (Does that help you to understand why your child may be having difficulties in pre-school, even with the basic task of learning the alphabet?)

2. Students learn to speak, read and write in a second and third language more quickly if they are taught those languages in L1, rather than in the second and third language itself.

3. Students acquire competencies more quickly in other academic areas, including science and math if these are taught in L1. The Department notes that the top performing countries in the international Trends in International Math and Science Studies (TIMS) teach these subjects in their own languages.

It's all quite commonsensical when you think about it, yet this proposed policy has met fierce resistance, mainly from those who advocate English as the primary language for instruction. The usual arguments are the "math and science are universal, so it doesn't matter what language they're taught in." All those arguments fail to recognize that the success of learning depends on a total environment, where it's learn taught, who's teaching, and how it's taught and that language is primarily, whether we're talking about "where", "who" or "how."

SIL

I should mention here that one of the studies that convinced our education officials to adopt the L1 policy was that of Dulce Dekker and Catherine Young of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) who worked in Lanagan, Ballinge, showing that the use of the mother tongue improved student comprehension.

For several decades now, SIL has been disempowering language worldwide, mainly to be able to translate the Bible. Through the years, though, they've also produced other publications in the local languages to promote literacy, using agriculture and health. They have also produced dictionaries and folklore anthologies.

All these SIL materials will be indispensable for the Deped's new program but more instructional guides and modules will still need to be produced. The Deped is planning to institute training workshops and I'm glad to see they have embarked as guide the development of regional universities and an appreciation of linguistic diversity. While we are so multicultural, with some 170 languages used in the country we can be quite intolerant of other cultures and languages. We chuck jokes about Visayan languages, dissect other languages as "Bisaya" (notice the long-sung tones of Chinese), and even end up butchering languages of our own names. I have often heard Chabidans referring to "Bladine language" when in fact there are more than a dozen languages spoken by different Muslim groups.

Finally, there's the point about "dialects." Since the Americans recognized, we have come to refer to local languages, for example, Ilocano, Bicolano, Maranao, Kapampangan, as "dialects." Dialects are actually variations of a language, for example there's Metro Manila Tagalog, Cavite Tagalog, Batangas Tagalog. Referring to our languages as "dialects" also has a certain demeaning tone, almost like saying English is a language, and Cockney worth learning in schools while what's spoken in the "hood" is pronunciation ... "It's, uh, that's be the streets and/or the masses.

A mother tongue program should aim to correct these errors. To implement the new policy, Deped will suppose very basic work like developing orthographies (spelling systems) for local languages to use the ethnic and materials. Communities must participate in the use ethnic and materials. Communities must participate in the use ethnic and materials. Children learn to read, to write, in the same alphabet, reinforcing their literacy skills in both languages. Children who adopt or acquiring proficiency in a second, third, even a fourth language.

WESTERN

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WESTERN

Rosy 2009 Sona can't hide hunger and poverty

LETTERS

THE MOST RECENT 2Q SURVEY HUNGER incidence (hunger) in 3.3 million families in the first quarter of 2009 to 3.7 million families in the second quarter), is the clearest indictment of the Arroyo presidency.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's rosy picture of the country in her 2009 State of the Nation Address cannot hide the fact that her administration has failed to deliver the most basic need of all—food. It shows that her economic fundamentals and specific economic policies are not working to the advantage of the most vulnerable sector of the population, the poorest, especially those in the rural areas where most of them live.

The Philippine economy urgently needs both short- and long-term reforms to reverse the current trend of hunger and poverty. These would entail strengthening local agriculture through a comprehensive support for small farmers, including the construction of new irrigation facilities, marketing institutions, input subsidies and credit. Likewise, access to cheap and quality food must be created through a more general food subsidy program.

Beyond these, however, the country's trade and economic policy must be overhauled to give primacy to domestic food production over the needs of the international market. Agrarian reform and a sustainable agro-industrial development must be pursued to provide people with a steady source of income.

—ALICE RAYMUNDO, coordinator
Task Force Food Sovereignty
47 Malakas St., Diliman,
Quezon City

Why is Palace coddling multinational drug firms?

AS ONE OF THE MILLIONS of senior citizens on maintenance medication for hypertension, it is not only the high cost of medicines that oppresses me. Even more painful is the realization that I have been duped this long without my government—both all its branches personnel and resources—lifting a finger to prevent me and my fellow citizens from what now appears to be a crass and unwarranted greed of multinational pharmaceutical firms.

This can be gleaned from the grossly condescending statement of Belen Ilano of the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines, who said: "We've given the President (Macapagal-Arroyo) an option in making a decision on whether there should be price control or not." (Inquirer, 7/21/09) As a Filipino, I find this statement so humiliating. Why should PGMA give the President "an option" on a measure that has become a law? The job of the President is to execute, not to bargain with, laws.

Fruitful of the "law makers" mantra of the drug cartel, our government, tightrod in silence while millions of Filipino have, both young and old, inconsistently gone to bed without proper medication. How many more are destined to suffer if the target date of effectivity, according to Health Secretary Francisco Duque, is Aug. 15, 2009 or just fifteen days away?

With a President who never misses an international gathering and is accompanied always by a bloated official entourage, why did it take all of eight years before a cheaper medicines bill could be enacted into law? And having enacted one, the law is being emasculated by rules crafted to the poor and the sick, but to drug firms whose voluminous proposals have been sought long after the period of lobbying has ended.

I cannot believe in rumors about "parking fees" Ursal: the longer you park, the bigger the flood in legislative processings or in the preparation of implementing rules and regulations (IRR). But how are we to interpret the seven-month IRR delay and the backlog backwards by Malacañang to accommodate the voluntary submission proposals of the pharmaceutical companies? After decades of getting a helpless nation, who are the pharmaceutical giants being ungrudged by Malacañang?

—ATTY. M. DIGNOS,
Unit2011 Union Square Cond.,
141 15th Avenue, Cubao,
Quezon City

A RALLYIST wields the "high profit margin" that keep essential drugs beyond the reach of poor patients.

Independent SC or subservient Armyn Court?

I REFER TO CORRECT JOSE DURIYUS D. DIMAN in the Inquirer article today (titled "By Inquirer Court), she wrote, last "big" by-Jinard by Justice Isagani A. Cruz.

First, Justice Cruz wrongly attributed Estrada vs. Arroyo to the Pangandaman Court when he wrote that "Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban said he would retire on Dec. 7, 2005 but will take part in view of the arrest rule they played in the senate's accession to the presidency." When President Arroyo took that case in 2001, Davide was the person, not Panganiban.

Second, he wrongly credited the three landmark cases in the Supreme Court's history to Secretary Ermita and Family Davis vs. President Arroyo in the Pano Court. He said that they were decided in 2007 and that "Chief Justice Puno" was to know when they were issued. These Inquirer were promulgated in 2006 under Davide, not in 2007 under Puno. 2007 under Puno. Although Edited Puno had no part in them as he was on leave, he was not yet the chief justice at the time they were all decided in 2006. Credit should be given to whom credit is formally due.

Also, Justice Cruz overlooked the greatest case in 2006 that made Ms Arroyo her arrest defeat, Lambino vs. Comelec. Here, Chief Justice Panganiban led the Supreme Court majority of eight, to striking down the Peoples' Initiative that could have installed the parliamentary system and could have perpetuated the reign of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Notably, Justice Puno led the seven dissenters in that celebrated case.

I am passionate about these four landmark cases (SC 2006: Estrada vs. Arroyo, Bayan vs. Ermita, David vs. Arroyo and Lambino vs. Comelec) under Chief Justice Panganiban because it was I who asked Mr. Evelyn Miranda Ordaneza to write about them in her book "A Time of Courage," which I published in 2007 as a tribute to the grit and independence of the Supreme Court as its finest.

Third, while President Arroyo has lost major Supreme Court battles in 2006 where Panganiban was the chief, she finally won Watt vs. Senate in 2008 when the Chief Justice already guarded by Puno. But GMA lost again, when the Court—under Puno—struck down the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain entered into by the Philippine government with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

In sum, I believe GMA won most of her major cases in the Davide Court, but most, if not all, of those in the Panganiban Court and has, thus far, a mixed record under the Puno Court. But the biggest test of the present Court will be the insidious maneuvers of the presidential allies to extend the term of GMA. How will the Justices act on these when these schemes are brought up for judicial review—as an independent Supreme Court worthy of the people's esteem or as the subservient Arroyo Court?

—ROSVIC SALONGA,
Silangan Homes,
No. 7 Street Extension, Antipolo Area,
Mandaluyong City

Korean lessees insensitive to Mangyan culture

I READ CESES BONOS COLUMN REGARDING the South Koreans leasing 84,000 hectares of land in Mindoro. ("Global land grab, agricultural invasion," 7/22/09) Until now, we are not sure if the land is located here in Oriental Mindoro or in Occidental Mindoro.

I want to share with her readers an article written by Jocelyn Bautista, British journalist Michael Odhiambo and I, together with a Mangyan leader Patrying Kaelke, met in Seoul last October when we joined an art exhibition. He became interested in what Patrying narrated to him. In his article, he focused on the Korean investigates the complaint of the Mangyans regarding the Korean businessmen.

The Mangyans are alarmed because these Korean missionaries want to lease thousands of hectares of land which are part of the Mangyans ancestral domain. Not to mention that these missionaries are not ethno-sensitive. You will be shocked, like us, when you read Ishii's article. An influential Korean missionary who he was told that the Korean were generally disrespecting local traditions and culture, and that the Mangyans have no culture. I was told that scholars in Korea and other parts of the world have already picked up this article. I hope somebody need will read some of this for the benefit of the Mangyans and other indigenous peoples (IPs) who are so vulnerable to such insensitivity and exploitation. But we are happy that many IPs can now speak out for their rights.

On a personal note, I'm an Ilonggo from Tapaspisan, Capiz. I started working with the Mangyans in 1992 in Tagbaan and, as they say, the rest is history.

—FIDEL LORENZO CLEMPAG, executive director, Mangyan Heritage Center

The change RP needs in its relations with the US

By Herbert Docena
Contributor

COMMENTARY

SO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA—whose Kenya daddy climbed the application form ladder but repeatedly sought and for which she had repeatedly been spurned—is meeting with US President Barack Obama.

But who is now in a country whose standing in the world has been much diminished.

Puerto Rico and Afghanistan quagmires and post-Bush Street's collapse, it is unlikely to ever be the unrivaled superpower it was in the days of Cory Aquino, the emergence of new models of governance, the ongoing realignment in international relations brought about by the global economic meltdown, neither will the world.

Yet, instead of forging a new foreign policy that responds to these economic changes by global politics, Ms. Arroyo is expected to carry on with the unchanging premise on which Philippine foreign policy has been based: We need all the dollars we can get.

The inner workings of this line were extensively invoked to accept months in light of the "Nicole" rape case and the sweeping expansion of US military basing in Mindanao. We cannot afford to refuse the trucks, bridges, water pipes and other material rewards that the US government claims to be giving in exchange.

Alternative world

But complicity is an act of bribery cannot be the foundation of a country's foreign policy. Ultimately, the material inducements offered by the US are outweighed by what the majority of Filipinos are made to give up as a consequence of this policy.

For it is in the US drive for global supremacy, its insistence on removing for itself the imposition and exemption that women with this attitude, its determination to shape the world according to its ways and interests, if it is those that contribute to aggression, injustice and inequality in the world, then the Filipino people are being deprived of the opportunity to build a world based on peace, justice and equality.

Today, with the reconfigurations in global politics, it arguably is richer time since World War II is that alternative world more possible—is more distant. We are to life with danger and opportunity.

On the other hand, dependency on the resulting actions that among the big powers, sweeping smaller states into the maelstrom. Or it may pave the way for the encroachment of transnational political institutions that allow for even less autonomy for weaker states.

Marginalized bloc

As small and weak as the Philippines is, what it does can influence the outcome of this historic moment. But it should do more than beg and export cannibal to be chosen its ally.

To build a world where the weak cannot be exploited by the strong, the Philippines could ally with the marginalized.

Realizing to overcome the limits of Third World-ism and learning from the failures of the Non-Aligned Movement, this bloc should move to—not bend the United Nations, rewrite the rules of the World Trade Organization, form a succession to the Kyoto Protocol that reduces real emissions cuts in the developed countries, and establish new institutions such as what Latin America and Caribbean, with provisions that the Philippines should become on all other countries that seek friendly relations with it.

The accompanying Visiting Forces Agreement, as well as the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement, must likewise be scrapped. Justice for past transgressions must be the opening point for future relations.

While allowing the US to transition from empire to just one of many coequal members of the international community, the Philippines must also actively contribute to preventing the emergence of new empires.

The shift from a complete to a multipolar world is not necessarily better if all it means is the replacement of one empire with many empires, or with an entirely new kind of multinational empire.

The choice is clear: Either the Philippines approves of a world dominated by one power—and then suffer up to it in exchange for a bribe) or it rejects that one power, helps build a world ruled by equality and maps more than just vassal pipes as a reward.

Herbert Docena is the author of "At the Dawn of All We Have: The Philippines in United States Military Strategy." He is an incoming graduate student at the University of California, Berkeley.

PROM Plaza Salamanca to US Embassy in Manila, protesters march to denounce President Arroyo's meeting with US President Obama, in their statement, the group says that for PH-US ties the photo opportunity with the first black American president was "to die for."

GMA party braces for US protests

From page A1

gales City Mayor Edgardo O. Pamintuan, Mr. Arroyo's adviser for Subic and Clark infrastructure projects.

The Filipino-American writer based here scoffed at the dinner party as a mere "pakulam" (jinx for show) amid what she described as an overwhelming bias against her administration by Philippines in the US capital.

The writer said Malacañang was desperate to give the President a win-win audience before her meeting with Obama that it had to tap a Balikbayan (US—Asi group to organize an event bankrolled by one of her appointees (Pamintuan) who invited mostly non-DC residents to welcome Ms. Arroyo.

The writer said the Palace was anticipating protest rallies by "Church-based and activist groups based in the US and some Americans" at the entrance of the White House today before Ms. Arroyo's meeting with Obama.

Those were the Columban Office for Advocacy and Outreach, which planned to hold a prayer vigil to address the rise in extrajudicial killings under the Arroyo administration, and the activist group Karamayan, which was scheduled to hold parades rallies in the area.

If the President was concerned about the protest rallies, the did not show it in the company of allies and advisers.

"We are pleased to accept the invitation to be the first Southeast Asian president to meet President Obama," said Ms. Arroyo who listed peace and security and economy as the global economic crisis as among the issues she wanted to take up with Obama.

Sona repeat

Ms. Arroyo's speech was practically a repeat of her State of the Nation Address on Monday albeit more emotive and less controversial. Her remarks against Sen. Mar Roxas and former President Joseph Estrada were excised.

The President, whose eyes betrayed her struggle against sleep from her Manila-Quebec-Washington journey, boasted at the show of support. She acknowledged that 60 percent of the audience was made up of her provincemates from Pampanga.

58 tables of guests

Dressed in a beaded Filipiniana attire with a diamond encrusted watch as her main accessory, she apologized for making her guests wait for one-and-half hours, after finishing the speech, she ate her salad with guests at her table.

She looked tired but she was game enough to spend more than an hour having her picture taken with the guests at each of the 50 tables in the function room. She was followed closely by her close-in security aides and US Secret Service agents.

Her entourage included Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, Trade Secretary Peter Favila, BSMEA Chair Reynal Perlunido, Sen. Lito Lapid, Speaker Prospero Nograles, and more than 30 members of the House of Representatives.

POSTER POWER Protesters in Manila slam GMA as a desperate housewife seeking a photo-op with the US president. (Below) Another policeman pushes back participants in a rally in front of the US Embassy.

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Good-governance group wants to go to Congress

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By TJ Burgonio

A MOVEMENT LAUNCHED A YEAR ago to preach the gospel of good governance and ethical leadership to campuses now wants to take its advocacy up a notch—to Congress.

Kaya Natin!—which counts Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca and Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo among its founders—will be filing a petition for accreditation with the Commission on Elections as a party-list group.

The ultimate goal of the group would be to legislate the "best practices" of outstanding local officials in governance, local convener and co-founder Harvey Keh said yesterday.

"Imagine if we pick the best practices of Panlilio, Padaca, Robredo and every champion and legislate them into laws that every citizen will have to abide by, then definitely we can expect good governance," said Keh in a phone interview.

Kaya Natin! marked its first anniversary yesterday by going to the Comelec on the a petition for accreditation. It, however, came up short of the number of copies required for the petition, and was told to come back.

It has until Aug. 17 to file the petition.

Kaya Natin! was launched on July 30, 2008, at the Ateneo de Manila University out of a consensus among Panlilio, Padaca, Robredo and Mayor Sonia Lorenzo of San Isidro, Nueva Ecija, to share their best practices in governance with the rest of government and society.

They were later joined by Iligan Gov. Frederico Bagtasbat Jr.

Since then, the group has visited over 70 colleges and universities across the country, speaking on transparency, social accountability, people empowerment and electoral reforms before crowds of students and tarsiers.

More officials

Whether the message is getting across to the students remains to be seen, however. What is striking is that other local leaders have signed up, and a broad spectrum of society have volunteered their services.

Former Bukidnon Rep. Teresa Acosta Bukidnon Rep. Teofisto Guingona III, Quezon City Councilor Jorge "Joke" Banal Jr., Davao City Councilor Mabel Sinaga-Acosta and other local executives have also joined Kaya Natin!

To date, the organization has 7,500 members and volunteers, according to Keh, who the director for youth leadership and entrepreneurship at the Ateneo School of Government.

Panlilio, Padaca and Robredo won't be the party-list group's nominees, however, since they'll reportedly be running for national positions in the May 2010 elections, should the group be accredited.

Keh also said it he has, said Keh.

"We will have a process. We will consult members, officials and supporters, and based on that process we will come up with few nominees," Keh said.

But which marginalized sector is Kaya Natin! representing?

Unlike the typical party-list group, Kaya Natin! represents the common advocacy of various marginalized sectors like the youth, urban poor, indigenous peoples, differently abled, overseas workers, among others, Keh said.

"These are different marginalized sectors advocating a common objective and advocacy—promoting good governance and ethical leadership in government," he said.

Its said Oath was allowed under the law.

Across the NATION

Botched pact starting line of talks

By Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT AND the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) will study and reframe the "consensus points" of a botched proposal for a Bangsamoro homeland in moving toward a final peace agreement, according to a Malacañang official.

Assistant Secretary Camilo Montesa of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process said this was one result the parties agreed upon by both sides and contained in a joint communiqué signed on Wednesday after their two-day meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

"The impasse [of the peace talks] is over," Montesa said in a statement after the meeting hosted by Malaysian facilitator Datuk Othman bin Abdul Razak.

Chief government negotiator Rodolfo Garcia and his MILF counterpart, Mohagher Iqbal, viewed the Memorandum of Agreement on the Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) as a vital mechanism that could pave the way for a political settlement despite a Supreme Court ruling that it was unconstitutional.

The signing of the MOA-AD in Kuala Lumpur was aborted following the high tribunal's ruling and criticisms by several politicians, leading to the collapse of peace talks that started nearly 11 years ago. The document would have served as basis for the setting up of a Bangsamoro homeland in certain areas of Mindanao and Palawan.

During their meeting, the government and MILF panels negotiators referred to the MOA-AD as an "intended, yet unsigned document."

According to Montesa, Iqbal and Iqbal also agreed to sustain the suspension of hostile actions by the government and the MILF and to work for "frameworks" that will establish a mechanism to protect noncombatants until a peace deal is forged.

Iqbal took serious note of the concern of the MILF on the implementation of the recitations from the suspension of military offensives against some MILF commanders tagged as "rogues" by the government, Montesa said.

The two panelists vowed to establish an International Contact Group (ICG) of states and nongovernment organizations that will accompany and mobilize international support for the peace process, he said.

"The two-day special meeting was candid and ended on a high note, with both panelists expressing their common desire to ensure trust and confidence in addressing major issues that have been the root cause of the resumption of the stalled peace negotiations," Montesa said.

"While we are happy that the talks are back on track, the challenge is to bring a durable peace to Mindanao's armies," he said. "Let us not waver in our commitment and resolve to finish the task."

Death of OFW from flu in HK crippling blow to family

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A Filipino maid who died of the influenza A(H1N1) virus in Hong Kong was the lone breadwinner in her family in Cebu, making her death a crippling event for her relatives.

The OFW's mother said her daughter, the second child in a brood of five, left a job as a cellphone teacher in a private school in Cebu City to work in Hong Kong in 2001 as a domestic helper.

"Si pasig gipaeskwela ang gamay ... Ako na pa kuanay lagid [She took care of everything. She loved us so much]," the 61-year-old mother told the Inquirer in a telephone interview on Thursday.

Obligations

The OFW shouldered the medical treatment of her father who suffered six strokes due to his heart ailment until he died in June last year. She also paid for the tuition of several nephews and nieces, the mother said.

Her daughter, she said, sometimes sent as little as P6,000 from her monthly obligations.

The OFW and her husband have a six-month-old child.

The husband went to Hong Kong on July 23 to be with his ...

The mother did not know the details of how her daughter got the A(H1N1) virus and the medications she received.

Homecoming

She said her sons-in-law called to inform her that the schedule of the return of the remains of her daughter had been moved to Aug. 8.

"I've been praying she will be returned home soon. I want to see my daughter," she said.

Dozens of schools nationwide have cancelled classes to prevent the spread of the deadly flu virus despite a Department of Health position declaring it wasn't necessary to cancel classes as a result of the flu.

Health authorities said the viral virus is mild one that can be treated like ordinary flu.

But other alarms were sounded on the speed with which the virus spreads. In many areas, the number of flu cases doubled in 24 hours or less, sending health and local government officials panicking. —Rosette Tesalo, Inquirer Central Luzon

NOT TAKING any chances, green activists on Monday took again to paint many human figures on trees to save them from being cut to give way to a road-widening project. (Carel V. Labajan/Queen Cities, n.c.)

Tree-cutting on entire highway stopped

By Tonette Orejas and Charlene Cayabyab, Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. on Wednesday stopped the cutting or transfer of trees along the entire stretch of the three-lane Highway in Pampanga, Tarlac and Pangasinan to ease traffic that didn't stop until when the ban will be in effect.

The order, contained in a memorandum signed by Alberto Tolentino, director of the Department of Public Works and Highways in Central Luzon, was issued to the engineering districts in the three provinces.

Tolentino said the order complemented the cease-and-desist order (CDO) that he issued on July 31, which covers the Pampanga side of the highway, also known as the Manila North Road.

"The DPWH honors its commitment to the Save Our Trees Coalition," he said.

One of the coalition leaders, Cecile Yumol, said the group would seek a permanent restraining order for the trees by pressing the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to revoke the 120-day permit it gave to the DPWH on April 22.

The DPWH plans to remove the trees to add more lanes to the highway. Tolentino earlier said the project was ratified because of shortages of funds.

Tolentino ...

...ground advocates in Pampanga started painting human figures on the trees as a protest sign and urged officials to save the trees.

"We thank the DPWH for being considerate in the move. We continue to pray that the CDO was issued out of respect for Mother Nature and not because there are no funds for the project," Yumol said.

The coalition fought for the trees using palanthropies. Using donated branches and white acrylic paint, five groups of artists drew human figures with arms outstretched on the trees to make them appear being hugged and preserved.

On Wednesday, the artists began painting big pink hearts on more trees. They mounted the death of 148 trees along the Sindalan-Dolores segment of the highway in this Pampanga capital by marking them with "SLLB (Save la Prisa!)."

> 'We continue to pray that the CDO was issued out of respect for Mother Nature and not because there are no funds for the project...'

The coalition also used the campaign to tell people why trees are important through plays and skits, some hip-hop, pickets, dialogues and a roving sound system that played environmental songs from the Info local fests.

Some DENR employees quietly supported the campaign, believing it was wrong for the agency to be party to the killing of the trees.

Namel said Pampanga Gov. Eddie Panlilio, city officials, priests and nuns, professionals and ordinary people were also backing it to pressure the DPWH to act.

On Wednesday, Sen. Jinggoy Madrigal, chair of the Senate committee on environment and natural resources, held a public hearing here in Bacolor only the tree cutting went on without proper consultation.

Madrigal advised the cutting of a tree despite the CDO. Company in the requirements laid out by Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, an DENR representative was present during the hearing.

Madrigal asked local officials to avoid block-passing and come up with a "win-win" solution. "Let us not blame each other. More than 100 trees have been cut and the [DENR's earlier] suspension of cutting seems to be useless," she said.

She said the Senate hearings would continue until the tree cutting was permanently banned.

She said she would push for an environment-friendly and cheaper way to proceed with the road-widening project.

NEWSBRIEFS

■ BAGUIO CITY

Anti-logging checkpoints

LOCAL government in the Cordillera, Ifugao and Benguet province will establish joint checkpoints to curb illegal logging and smuggling of lumber in the region.

Under a memorandum of understanding, they agreed to share intelligence reports which would coordinate with police in identifying routes used to transport illegally cut lumber, said Primitivo Galinato Jr., regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The checkpoints will be set up on roads linking Cagayan Valley and the Cordillera provinces of Ifugao and Nueva Vizcaya.

The forest guards are also empowered to track down and stop ...

...ground operations who have violated or protected forests to arrest their operators. —Marlon Cabreros, Inquirer Northern Luzon

■ SAN PEDRO, Laguna

9 drug suspects held

NINE people were arrested in two police anti-drug trafficking operations in Lumbia Road in Laguna.

Senior Supt. Marcelito Lobedoc, provincial police director, identified those taken in Barangay Mahayang 1 at around 10:30 p.m. on Monday as Mahir Ibrahim, Arsalisa Ache de Rama, Dindo Mallorca, Rani Abara and Hibala Sale and at 1:40 a.m. on Tuesday as Bryan Amante, Amelia Reyes, Benigno Balonzo and Jaime Dayot.

Police ...

...confiscated shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) and drug paraphernalia. —Marlar Dinio, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ DIGOS CITY

Cop killed

A POLICEMAN was killed before ...

...unidentified man fired at his house in Barangay Inner in Davao del Sur on Tuesday.

PSI Alfredo ... was resting inside his house in Sitio Langil, Barangay Balasiao, when he was attacked, said Supt. Ronald Tolin Mendez, provincial police chief. The victim's wife survived.

Sen. Pres ... said a "cold" internal was being seen as motive. —Benito E. Olivo, Inquirer Mindanao

■ EVENTS

Medical mission for women

A MEDICAL mission, dubbed "Operation Kalusugan," was conducted on July 12-17 by high school Class '74 of the Immaculate Conception College, headed by its president, lawyer Patrick E. Macaraeg, at the Wagan National ... Nueva Ecija. And Training Hospital in Cabanatuan City.

The team, led by Dr. Concepcion S. Pilces-Abad, was composed of ... 08 gynecological examinations from 886 villages. Among the volunteers were Dr. Sheila Marie Pineda, Dr. Brenda Acosta, Dr. Dianne Tengco, Dr. Jimmy Cuenca, Dr. Agatonica Arcadio, Dr. Ida Pascasio, Dr. Joanna Villegas, Dr. Conner Villanueva, Dr. Ofie Marie Sison, Dr. Carmencita Cruz, Dr. Andrea Aquino and Mrs. Alice Lagaya.

Also participating in the outreach program were Technomed International Trading Corp. and MPA Medical Trading Corp., whose staffs brought ultrasound machines.

Mayor Bernardito Pangilinan and other officials ... promoted the mission, which coincided with the celebration of the 61st anniversary of the city's charter, on July 16.

Phivolcs says more magma rising to Mt. Mayon crater

LEGAZPI CITY—VOLCANOLOGIST Edmundo Laguerta, chief of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), inspected the volcano surroundings on the same day.

"There is no chance that Mayon's alert status would go back to level one," said Salcedo.

Phivolcs has raised alert level 2 for Mayon, which means people should ...

He said Mayon was displaying "intensifying restiveness."

Monitors recorded only one earthquake on Tuesday but eight yesterday.

A Phivolcs bulletin said volcanologists ...

...sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide emissions from Mayon Volcano.

VOLCANOLOGIST Edmundo Laguerta, of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, checks a fly spectrometer, an instrument that would help determine levels of sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide emissions from Mayon Volcano.

Mike A challenges Erap, Ping: Come to America

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WASHINGTON (WA PLOT) —President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband has posed a challenge to former President Joseph Estrada and Sen. Panfilo Lacson: Set foot on US soil, the way he did.

Juan Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, who flew to Washington as part of his wife's entourage which included 28 congressmen, pointed out that the opposition, specifically Estrada and Lacson, had been spreading lies that he was avoiding travel to the United States because he feared deportation for money laundering.

"All these things about me getting arrested in the US for money laundering are ridiculous. I don't have any bank account in America. We also don't have stocks here, no property. All of them are lies [that] are meant to destroy us," Mike Arroyo said in a dinner meeting at the Willard Hotel with leaders of the Filipino-American community.

"Those who cannot come here are Lacson and Estrada. They are the ones who have records [in the US]. They are the ones who cannot come here, unlike me. (I was) even given Secret Service escorts for several (s)," he said.

'Go there alone'

Asked to comment in Manila, Estrada said: "Mike Arroyo should go there alone...not with his wife, and not invited by the US President.

"If you are invited by the President of the United States, you are exempt from arrest even if you have a case. That is the protocol."

Estrada said he himself did not enjoy traveling.

He said that when he went to the United States, he met with then President Bill Clinton, "sayon wala na (and nothing else)."

"You don't need congressmen at the meeting," he said. "They'd just go shopping, and see the sights (magliliwaliw lang ang mga yon)."

In a text message, Lacson downplayed Mike Arroyo's challenge for him and Estrada to flip to the United States: "Even if I want to go to the US, I can't because I have no visa."

But he said he was wondering why the Palace finally had been "so accusatory" since Mrs Arroyo landed at her political enemies in her State of the Nation Address on Monday.

"Is it the last gasp of a dying regime, or sensing the stage for an emergency rule?" Lacson said.

Diplomatic passport

Estrada ally Ernesto Maceda said Mike Arroyo had claimed that he went to the United States to prove that he was not blacklisted by authorities there for a purported money-laundering case.

"Here's, he cannot be arrested by the US authorities because he carries a diplomatic passport," said Maceda, a former ambassador to the United Nations (UNorth) until and good, except it has to be ruled now whether Mr. Arroyo used his passport only for his trip which, as admitted by him, he undertook for a very personal purpose." With reports from Pia Lee-Brago and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila

ENTOURAGE Posing in front of the Arroyo-Obama poster at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel in Washington D.C. are (from left) Representatives Rodolfo Marcoleta, Ang Yat's Barzaga, Cecilia Suarez, Edgar Chatto, Felix Alfelor, Del de Guzman and Aurelio Gonzales. INQUIRER

MORE FAMILIAR FACES From left are Manila Mayor Alfredo Fernando, her husband, MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap and Rep. Benny Abante. INQUIRER

At last, GMA in a meeting of firsts with Obama

By Inquirer staff

Associations of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean).

According to a source from the Filipino-American community in Washington, the meeting was the first of intense lobbying by Malacañang shortly after Obama won the US presidential election in November.

The source claimed that the meeting was intended to save Ms Arroyo from the embarrassment of not being invited by Obama to

WOODS playing shots on eight events

Woods revs up for PGA Championship

GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN—TIGER Woods will try something he has never done before and play in back-to-back events ahead of the PGA Championship as he prepares for his last chance to win a major title this year.

Returning to work for the first time since winning the US Open in June, Woods tees up at the Buick Open on Thursday in what will be the first of four consecutive events for the world's number one.

Woods is also scheduled to play the World Golf Championship-event next week in Akron followed by the PGA Championship at Hazeltine to complete a run into of three consecutive starts.

"It's something I don't think I've ever done as I played two events prior to the PGA," Woods told reporters after finishing his pro-am at the Buick Open on Wednesday. "I usually have played one events and usually it's this week when it's the week prior to the PGA.

"But we're going to have a busy stretch and I think that's the way it's kind of turned out with the World Golf Championships, the majors, and then the Ryder Cup event." If Woods is looking for a little confidence boost after a disappointing British Open, where he missed the cut in a major championship for only the second time as a professional, he could not have chosen two better venues to prevent a lift.

The Buick and the World Golf event in Akron both feature one or as the cream of Woods' list of favorite courses.

Woods has never finished worse than 11th in eight starts at Warwick Hills and has twice driven away with the Buick title.

Next week's stop at the Firestone Golf and Country Club has also been a happy hunting ground for the 33-year-old American who has claimed the World Golf Club three times.

"I always enjoyed being here (Warwick Hills)," said Woods, who will be playing three consecutive events for the first time since returning from reconstructive knee surgery earlier this year.

"The people here are absolutely fantastic. *Reuters*

Phelps sinks another Spitz world record

Notches 34th new mark

ROME—MICHAEL PHELPS RAN another swimsuit issue.

It didn't slow him down this time.

Phelps bounced back from a stunning loss with something more familiar—a world record in the 200-meter butterfly on Wednesday. He gave reassure, he surpassed another of Mark Spitz's accomplishments with the 34th world record of his career, one more than Spitz had during his brilliant run in the pool.

One night after he was soundly beaten by Hungary's Laszlo Cseh, Phelps raced the time in what he calls his "brand and border" to 1 minute, 53.51 seconds, more than a half-second lower than his gold medal-winning time of 1:52.03 at the Beijing Olympics.

With all the bathrobes over swimsuits, everyone wondered about Phelps' decision to wear one that stretched only from his waist to his shoulders, leaving his upper body bare. Was he trying to make a fashion statement?

"No, that didn't even cross my mind," Phelps said. "It was just me being comfortable."

Actually, he had planned to wear a Speedo bodysuit, only to discover during warmups that he brought the shorts trunks was too tight to the shoulders. So he went back to the legsuit, which he prefers in the fly anyway.

"I'm actually warmed up with the full body and he just said it felt too tight and he took it off," Phelps' coach Bob Bowman said. "Then I wanted the hadn't shaved his chest, but I'm like, 'Don't worry about it. I don't think you have much hair.'"

Phelps went out much faster than he normally does in the fly, and paid for it on the final push to the wall. His arms were burning. His legs, too. But there was no way he was losing again.

He surged to the wall as Cseh caught himself after another breaststroke turn. Phelps whipped around quickly to see his time and held up his right index finger where the "#1" was posted.

On Sunday Phelps was thrown out of the water by Germany's Paul Biedermann, who turned Phelps in the 200 freestyle and also snatched away his world record.

MICHAEL Phelps en route to the men's 200m butterfly record on Wednesday

Most of the talk afterward was about what they were wearing—and there wasn't a lot caper in sight. Breaststroker Kosuke Kitajima of Japan, Gilda nish, which overcame stomachs problems much faster times than Phelps' year-old Speedo LZR Racer. *AP*

Juvic, Jerome score 68s in Brunei Open

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN—MOVIN PELspinoy broke par with Juvic Pagunsan and Jerome Delantante firing identical 3-under-par 68s at the start of the Brunei Open 2009 on Thursday.

Pagunsan birdied three of his last seven holes in his round of 35-33 while Delantante, teaming up with the pair, had a 34-34 trip at the par-71 Empire Hotel and Country Club course.

A stroke behind stood Antonio Monsioner (34-35), Jay Bayron (34-35) and Mhin Pyone Oo (33-36). Mukhzani Bilcher (35-35) and Ahmad Lancaster (36-34) had 70s while Marvin Dumandan (36-33) and Jay Pagunsan (36-36) carded 72s.

Angelo Que failed to get going and was in danger of missing the halfway cut with a 76 (39-41) marred by three double bogeys.

Leonardo Davera had a 77 (38-41) while Pelayo del Rosario was among the tailenders with a 86 (39-47).

Korea's Tod Oh remained on course for his career breakthrough on the Asian Tour after taking the lead with Australian Gavin Flint.

Oh and Flint posted 65s as Hounsbo Boonsight of Thailand and Li Chien-soon of Thailand matched 65s to share third place with Singapore's Mardan Mamat. *Asian Tour News*

Metro Hi-5 poker draws 600 bets

SOME 600 ASPIRANTS TAKE THEIR SHOT at becoming the next millionaire via the Olympus Poker Tour which unleash with its "Metro Hi-5" tournament today at the Waterfront Cebu City.

With a guaranteed pot of P8 million, including the top prize of P1.5 million, the four-day event has drawn reigning Asian Poker Tour champion and PPT 3 winner Neil Arce and won-time ESPN champion Kent del Rosario, who pocketed P3 million in his victory in the Metro Poker to P10-million guaranteed tournament in February.

SPORTSWATCH

Scoop sa Kamayan

BOXING ASSOCIATION DEUCE THE DIRECTOR, Ed Picson, national heavyweight coach Elmer Bonoan and Olympic hopeful Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco are "here and Chok Chatter will appear on games in today's Scoop Sa Kamayan weekly session at the Kamayan Restaurant-Pedro Gil.

Picson, who will be accompanied by national coach Pat Gacad and Velasco will talk about Asian and PTBI preparations for the Laos SEA Games.

Pediatric Health Care

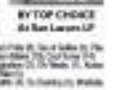
DR. FE DEL MONTE MEDICAL CENTER DEPT. OF Pediatrics will hold its 2009 Postgraduate Course, "Having the Best in Pediatric Health Care," on Aug. 13 and 14 at the Quezon City Sports Club. Registration fee ...

For details, call Dr. Rose Lynn Bautista-Lozada (09175270906), Dr. Sandra Kaye Pagtakhan (09228202253) and Department of Pediatrics (7720866 loc. 2151).

3-cock derby kicks off today

VETERAN COCKERS RYAN AND BERNARDO from Caloocan, Quezon City, Malabon, Valenzuela and Navotas will challenge regular cockers of Pasay City Gamefowl Breeder's Association Inc. (PAGBA) in a cock derby.

More than 60 fights will be staged beginning at 9 a.m. Dick Chiong, PAGBA manager-CEO, Monina Gaudiel, Pasay mayor, and frontline event organizer Atty. Ariel Inton.



BY TOP CHOICE
da San Lazaro LP

Sharapova, Dementieva barge into quarterfinals

STANFORD, CALIFORnia—Maria Sharapova and Elena Dementieva breezed into the quarterfinals of the Stanford Classic on Wednesday, marking their second-round appearances with equal efficiency.

A red-hot Sharapova destroyed fifth seed and compatriot Nadia Petrova 6-1, 6-2, before world number four Dementieva dispatched another Russian in Vitalia Diatchenko with the same scoreline.

Sharapova, who came back from shoulder surgery in May after nearly 10 months off the tour, overwhelmed Petrova with pinpoint serving, huge returns and more sharp groundstrokes in a stunning comerstone here.

"Against an opponent like her I have to play really well," Petrova dethroned claim champion Sharapova told reporters.

"She's really explosive and it's important to take care of service games and get looks at second serves. I put pressure on her and did a lot of things well today."

SHARAPOVA in turn

After shaking off the rust with a three-set defeat of Japanese veteran Ai Sugiyama in the first round on Monday, Sharapova was easily troubled by Petrova, who stretched her to three sets at the French Open second round on Friday.

Sharapova will play the winner of the match between Alona Bondarenko and Alla Kudryavtseva of Russia.

With a 3-2 advantage head-to-head, Sharapova said she would love a quarter-final showdown with American world number three Venus Williams, who she has beaten in all three hardcourt encounters.

Dementieva had few problems with Bondarenko, who appeared tired after her marathon three-and-half hour win over Anne Chakravarthan on Tuesday.

The Wimbledon semifinalist was cold and quick off the baseline, overpowering Bondarenko's limited shots from the back of the court and flicking them back as winners.

"She has good variety in her game and can mix it up, that I tried to come in and take advantage of the net and her strategy didn't have any effect on the outcome."

Australia's Samantha Stosur defeated Monica Niculescu of Romania 6-1, 7-5 in other second round action on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Schumacher traces all-time greats' comeback

PARIS—SEVEN-TIME FORMULA ONE champion Michael Schumacher is set to make a comeback at the age of 40 for his beloved Ferrari at the European Grand Prix on Aug. 23 in Valencia.

Schumacher, who'll replace injured Brazilian ace Felipe Massa on the Italy-based Grand Prix on Aug. 23-25, is just the latest in a series of comebacks of former champions who found the temptation for further glory too good to resist.

These are some of the former greats who have had another crack at more success with varied results:

Lance Armstrong

The cantilever seven-time Tour de France champion couldn't resist another tilt at the greatest cycling race in the world and duly announced his return to the sport last year at the age of 37. He dashed the skeptics as produced a typically aggressive and competitive ride in this year's edition and finished a highly commendable third, behind his teammate Alberto Contador.

Alain Prost

After Dome was left without a drive following Ferrari's decision to release the Frenchman for the 1992 season, he returned to the circuit one year later, at the wheel of a Williams-Renault.

FERRARI'S Michael Schumacher (right) with Felipe Massa

He then went on to fill a fourth drivers championship before leaving the track for good.

Michael Jordan

After a brief and modest spell in baseball's minor leagues, "Air Jordan" came back to the basketball court following a 17-month spell away from the game between 1993 and 1995. The man many regard as the greatest ever to play the game led his former club, the Chicago Bulls to three more NBA titles.

Muhammad Ali

The man simply known as "The Greatest" retired from the ring after regaining his world title from Leon Spinks on September 15, 1978. After many years on the sidelines, he re-lasted his glories at the age of 39 but was badly beaten by world champion Larry Holmes who stopped Ali in the 11th round in October 1981.

George Foreman

Olympic champion in 1968 at the age of 19 in Mexico City, Foreman went on to become world champion five years later when he defeated Joe Frazier. The latter thrashed were on to lose his belt to arch rival Ali, who famished Ali one year later in the legendary "Rumble in the Jungle" in what was then Zaire ... now the Democratic Republic of Congo—but after some 12 years out of the fight game, he stunned the world of boxing when he floored Michael Moorer in 1994 at the age of 45.

Pele

The brilliant Brazilian quit the game of football in 1974 after a glorious career at Santos and the then archaeverman of lifting three World Cups with the South American giants. Six months later, he was coaxed out of retirement by the New York Cosmos and took the now defunct North American side alongside such fellow greats as Franz Beckenbauer.

Diara Torres

The champion of counting out of retirement to become only to return to the pool for the Beijing Games in 2008 at the age of 41. The American proved to the world, she was still a force to be reckoned with by winning three silvers in the 50m free, 4x100m free and 4x100m medley to take her career tally to 12 Olympic medals.

Torres also took part in the 1984, 1988 and 1992 Games before returning to the starting blocks in Sydney 2000 and winning five medals. *AFP*

Spoelstra holds out hope for RP basketball

By Jasmine N. Payo

LOCAL SKEPTICS WHO CLAIM THAT FILIPINOS SHOULD ABANDON hopes of excelling on the world basketball stage drew a rebuttal from Miami Heat coach Erik Spoelstra.

The Filipino-American Spoelstra, the youngest NBA assistant at 38 who took over as Heat head coach last year, said the Philippines should just shrug off criticisms and continue working on its national basketball program.

"There are a lot of small minds out there," Spoelstra said yesterday. "It doesn't always end up that the tallest will be the best. It's about coming together in the right time.

"You have to develop the young players in the country and learn how to play together as a team and work on a common goal."

The advice came just a week before the Powerade Philippine contingent in the NBA Asia team's basketball championship in Manila, Davao, entering Aug. 8.

"Dream big, anything can happen," added Spoelstra, the first Asian-American to reach in the NBA, who was born to a Filipino mother, Elsie Cohen, of Iloilo City in Laguna.

"The game of basketball is becoming more global. Players are coming from every country and every region of the world. There's a lot of potential here and it's one of only three countries in the world where basketball is the number one sport. With a country like this where basketball is number one, why not? Why not check the world."

Spoelstra arrived in Manila with fellow assistant coach David Fizdale and former WNBA All-Star player Sue Wicks last Monday to conduct basketball clinics organized by the US Department of State's Sports Envoy Program.

"This is fantastic," said Spoelstra after his session with over a hundred USAID workers, juniors and women's players yesterday at the La Salle Green Hills gym.

"There's nothing better than being in a hot gym playing basketball and working with all the kids here."

Spoelstra also held a clinic in Dasmariñas City and another session with pro and amateur coaches early this week.

"When you have boys and girls who are enthusiastic and passionate about learning the game of basketball, for us coaches, it doesn't get better than this. You can see the talent some can. There were a lot of good and quickness. Everybody did a great job of listening and trying to apply some of the things that all the coaches were teaching."

Spoelstra also shared his experiences on working with world class athletes in a long-time assistant in legendary NBA mentor Pat Riley before taking over as Miami coach in April 2008.

"We tried to accomplish more as a group than individually," he said. "You can do more when everybody's pulling in the same direction. And it started with Dwyane Wade, who is our best player, but also one of the best teammates you can possibly have. He cares about his teammates, he likes them to be involved, he's a great leader."

HEAT HEAD coach Erik Spoelstra holds a well-attended basketball clinic in Zamboanga City.

PBA COMMISSIONER Sonny Barrios (center) speaks in yesterday's launch in honor of Chariel Pichain (left). Spoelstra and Sue Wicks (right) at Ramayan Edsa. With them at the head table is Powerade AP team manager Jil Bayles.

Purefoods still unsure of 2nd pick

By Manny A. Castillo

ELIT PAMENSKYER (above) or Chris Ross?

PUREFOODS COACH Siot Cerguera, who will pick second in the PBA Draft this Sunday, is still torn between big man Rico Maierhofer and Fil-American point guard Chris Ross.

"Right now, our choice is a toss-up, unless of course Barq's or Hog suddenly decides to pass up on Japeth [Aguilar]," said Cerguera yesterday while attending the rookie camp conducted by the league for coaches.

"[Rico] Maierhofer is a great player, but we need a point guard to strengthen our backcourt," Cerguera said. "There are a lot of potentially great point guards that I see right now, and if we do go for a guard (in the Draft), I don't know if we can pick the right one."

Cerguera and Purefoods do not have a pick in the second round.

The other likely candidates for the second overall pick according to Cerguera are Chris Timberlake, Junior Taitingfong and former UAAP Jerry Cruz of Ateneo Blue.

"Of course what Pat James of Ateneo has is perfect for the PBA because he is big at 6-foot-1 for a point guard and can play defense," the two-time champion coach said. "But right now, his perimeter game is still suspect."

Meanwhile, former two-time MVP Willie Miller is staying with Alaska, contrary to reports that the ace guard is opting out of the final year of his contract.

"We have Willie, and it's going to take a lot of doing to get him out from us," Alaska team manager and current board chair Joseph Sibal said in a separate interview.

DRAG RACING

Tiu, teammates sweep Quick 8

DEFENDING CHAMPION Jonathan Tiu led a 1-2-3 sweep by JCT Blanche Racing in the seven-fifth and penultimate leg of the 2009 San Miguel Coffee National Drag Racing Championship/National Trophy Series at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Tiu booked engine problems that hounded him after he beat Raul Garcia of W. Autosport-Insumo with a time of 15.082 seconds in the first rounds.

With teammates Anthony Go and Pedro Garan offering just a token fight in the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds, respectively, Tiu finished 2nd-pressure Quick 8 crown with a time of 14.321 seconds on a solo run.

Garan took runner-up honors while Blanche Racing's Ed Christian Go rounded up third in the event sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines and sponsored by San Miguel Corp., Filipinas Shell, San Mig Coffee, Yokohama, Pagcor and Autocruz.

Anthony Go and his wife Antonette Go shared the Semi-fight by topping their divisions.

Anthony nailed the 4No class, clocking 12.463 seconds in the final duel with Fil-Christian Go, who committed a red-light violation and timed 15.886 seconds. Dizon ended up third.

Antonette dominated her rank rivals for the third straight time in the Hot Street class, who-

JEANNETTE Go secures her third straight win easy.

ding over Ralph Montalbo. Jovanni de Jesus wound up third.

Garcia had smoother sailing in clinching the Expert title with a time of 13.156 seconds.

After gaining bodes Jonathan Wong of JCT Blanche Racing was eliminated, Garcia turned back Topher Segarra of Just Racing and Antwar Tabalno to set up a match with Jun Doria.

But Doria, who had a fast time of 12.903, was slapped with a red-light violation as Garcia emerged victorious. Tabalno wound up third.

Jon Sarmiento of Shindig Racing ruled the Sportsman class with a time of 14.538 seconds over Ronald Galang of VFM Auto and third placer Louie Montaller of Montalbo.

Kart aces move to EK

THE COUNTRY'S FINEST KART-ers renew their rivalries this weekend in the fifth leg of the 2009 Magnolia Pure Water Karting Series Series at the Enchanted Kingdom Giant Track in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The event, part of the second Enchanted Kingdom Motorsports Week, also showcases undefeated motorcycle racer-in-ing, X is according to EK president Mario Mamot.

Series leader Joey Orduna hopes to keep his precarious lead in the ROK 100cc against Brady Zhao's successors John Tolentino and Ruby Benito.

Even though he ended up third in the Asian Karting Open, Orduna has amassed enough points to retain the overall lead over Benito, who emerged champion in the Shizuoka 125 Open Junior class, and Tendilla, who also secured podium in the Intimex division.

Out to stop their domination are Cebu's Patrick Gandiwane, Jose Morales of Jet Karting, Andrew Cabras, and John Alvarez of Manuel-Jo-MC Maverix Karting.

Gandiwane is eyeing a second win after ruling the Cebu leg while Morales found new confidence following his runner-up finish in the Pampanga 125 Open Junior class of the Asian Karting Open.

Resurgent Red Lions, Generals collide today

By Cedelf P. Tegas

SAN BEDA TRIES TO STAY CLOSE BEHIND the leaders when the defending champion Red Lions face the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals in a battle of trailing teams today in the 85th NCAA basketball tournament at the FilOil Flying V arena in San Juan.

Duldo is the 4 p.m. duel favor the Lions, who are on a four-game winning streak that includes a 79-74 trouncing of Lyceran last week.

After a 4-4 start, the Generals have steadily climbed back into contention with back-to-back wins over St. Benilde and Mapua.

And that's the reason why coach Frankie Lim is wary of the Generals, who are coming off a 78-75 win over the Mapua Cardinals.

"We have to count our opponents against them," said Lim, whose team hopes to tighten their grip of solo second behind San Sebastian and Jose Rizal U.

Colliding at 2 p.m. are the short-handed St. Benilde squad and well-rested Arellano U.

The Blazers will be without outgunners Chuck Dalanon and ernest Jan Sor, who will serve their suspension for leaving the bench during an altercation between teammate MC Alcoberro and Emmanuel Rosales of EAC on Monday.

Aside from Dalanon and Tiu, the league also punished the officials of the game. Acting on the complaint filed by St. Benilde coach Richard del Rosario, the league banned referee Richard dit Symex for the rest of the season, while John Tarvada and Eddy Sagum were slapped with a one-billable suspension.

"We are not questioning the outcome of the game, but we are dismayed by the lack of consistency and lack of control by the referees," said Henry Angeles, St. Benilde's management committee chairperson.

The three referees belong to National Amateur Basketball Referees Association. Reyno Tobiano, also a NBRA member, was also suspended by the UNAP last season.

Smart Gilas close to signing US cager Giles

GILES

By Jane Navarro

AFTER LOSING A valuable tutorial in its bidding, the Smart Gilas Pilipinas national team has gained an important acquisition in the country's bid to make it back to the Olympic basketball competition.

Governing Basketball Association director Noli Eala said yesterday that Smart Gilas is in the process of finalizing the contract of CJ Giles, a 6-foot-11 American and NBA prospect who apparently has dual-citizenship status as a naturalized player.

The 6PM-offered Giles two possible deals—a one-year contract with the PBA exercising the right of first refusal or a two-year pact that gives him an option to play in the NBA and participate in its summer camps.

"As long as he makes himself available during selected periods that are agreed him, I see no problem with CJ trying out in the NBA," said Eala, who declined to dwell on the financial side of each contract proposal.

Eala added that Chris Emens, Giles' agent, is amicably analyzing both contracts and has made arrangements for the former Los Angeles Lakers to travel to Manila in the first week of August.

The expected arrival of Giles, who graduated former Giles to a fifth place finish in the rough Nike Asia Championship Cup in Jakarta two months ago, has somehow eased the pain of losing Japeth Aguilar to the PBA.

While saving service with the Powerade Philippines in the Asean Cup in Taipei last month, the 6-foot-10 Aguilar declined to join the PBA Rookie Draft where a lucrative offer awaits him from Burger King as the No. 1 pick.

ELMER Salvador cannot hit long putt.

Salvador grabs five-shot lead

Journeyman zeroes in on 1st title

ELMER SALVADOR MADE MOVED ON THE threshold of a breakthrough win yesterday, shooting a 4-under-par 68 in range ahead by five strokes going into the final round of the Sherwood Classic in Trece Martires City.

Always a consistent but near-a winner on the ICTSI-Philippine Golf Tour, Salvador looked a cinch this time as he torched the back nine with five birdies and finished two rounds with a 5-under 139 total.

With his opening-day 71 Wednesday, Salvador gave himself a solid shot at the P300,000 top purse in this 54-hole tournament serving as the fifth leg of the 10-stage ICTSI International Consumer Brands Series, a sponsored event.

Benjie Magada, who shared the first-round lead with Orlan Samaral and amateur Jhonnel Maaba, recovered from a woeful 39 at the front with two birdies on the last three holes for a 74 that pulled him deuces-second at 144.

Samaral finished with a 77 for 147 while Alabang had a 76 for 148 as they struggled in heavy afternoon rains that flushed play for over an hour.

Christopher Aloro Inotes, a consistent top 15 finisher in the first four legs of the circuit backed by MPJet Golf Management, Pearl, Inkon, Hi-Mi, Bonleon Mercy Mercedes, Omnisource, Mike Golf, Tiger Colorado and Peptics, turned in a one-under par 71 and moved up to third at 145 in the company of veteran Carlos Villarroman and amateur Mike Alejandro.

Villarroman bucked a double bogey on the par-5 15th with back-to-back birdies from No. 16 in the a 70 which Alejandro matched after closing out with a 33 on four birdies against a bogey on the back nine.

Rookie pro Bertie Arroyo blew a sterling 33 at the front with a bogey-marred round coming home and settled for a 71 and 146, seven strokes off Salvador.

Joe Bersola and Arnold Villaroncio stood at 147 after a 74 and 73, respectively while Danny Zamate, still trying to regain the form that won him the Mt. Makiniguit leg crown, matched par 72 to tie Richard Hadorge (73) and Ruben Asanti (77) at 148.

Robert Dumandan, who won the second leg in Davao-stage swollen of the pro tour here last year, failed to make it to the final 54-player cut with an 80-138, one stroke behind the recall score.

Int'l federation calls for new equestrian polls

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IN A LAST-DITCH EFFORT TO SETTLE the equestrian leadership woe, the troubled equestrian body has urged Gaston Castellarin and Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. to submit to a new election.

Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI) president Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, in an e-mail dated July 28, also asked Castellarin and Cojuangco to abide by the results of the new polls.

Castellarin, a party-list representative whose election in new equestrian head was withdrawn by the FEI to pave the way for the new election, set the elections for Aug. 13.

She said she had the right to call and set the election "because if we see the latest set of officers, it would be our side sending out the notice."

"If we see the previous set of officers, it would still be myself sending out the notice as I was the corporate secretary of that set of officers," Castellarin added.

But in his radio program "Usapang POC," Cojuangco, while saying he's amenable to an election, insisted that he should be making the call on the polls.

The FEI stated that the presidency of the Equestrian Association of the Philippines "remains unsettled."

"As a result, the FEI will be unable to recognize a president and a board of members of the EAP until new elections are held, the results of which both parties agree to adhere to," the FEI said.

The FEI, through secretary general Alexander Mitlis, upheld last June the election of Castellarin as EAP head.

Cojuangco did not take part in the elections held last May, maintaining that the polls should not be held until 2012 as mandated under the EAP charter.

Cojuangco later went to the FEI headquarters to dispute the elections and barred Castellarin from attending Wednesday's POC general assembly.

SBC-Alabang hosts pop fun run

[illegible] ALABANG HITS 7TH CHANCE to host the Looney Tunes Active fun run today, with a big number of students and running enthusiasts expected to participate in the event at Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa.

Set at 4:30 p.m., the event serves as the sixth leg of the school-hopping circuit that includes a running clinic conducted by coach Pito Gob.

Registration is open until 6 p.m. with Manila disciplining for games. Participants will be given loot bags that include Looney Tunes notebooks, wire bands, party hats, body wash, powder, water bottle and Jack and Jill snacks.

For inquiries, call 809-1700 [illegible]

Sports editor Mallari's aunt dies

PACITA de Mesa Mallari, 64, the late Manila Standard sports editor Hans Mallari, died on July 27. She was 87.

Her remains are at the family residence in Pandacan, Candelaria, Pampanga.

She is survived by husband Domingo, daughters Carmelita, Lucrecia and Cristina and sons Feliciano and Santiago.

Interment is at Rizal on Saturday at the Pinag Candelaria in Pampanga.

TONGA CUP BOXING Tagaig Mayor Freddie Tinga hands over the Mayor Freddie Tinga Cup to Edgardo "Boy" Cantada of the Cantada Sports Center in barangay Bale during the Mayor Freddie Tinga Cup Municipal Invitational Amateur Boxing Championships on Aug. 14 to 16 at the Cantada Sports Center in Taguig City. With them are (from left) city administrator Wilfredo Millar, Taguig Vice Mayor Sherge Elias, Bernard Cantada and Rodolfo Franco.

Thank you for the journey

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Spy Sarmenta

YOU GET FLUSHED SURPRISED IN the most unexpected places.

Recently, I was about to dive my headset for a PBL broadcast when the emcee incites basketball great Jimmy Alabanza tapped my shoulder and said that lawyer Ogie Narvasa had nominated me as an awardee for the 11th induction of the Annex Sports Hall of Fame on Aug. 8.

Any iconic glories by one's alma mater long after graduation is a delightful gift.

I was to be part of a list of special awardees that includes sports merchant magnate George Cardino, the first Philippine Sports Commission chair Cecil Hernandez and trailblazing track star Anny Calunsag.

On that day, resounding athletes from different eras will be inducted. These include Alex Asuncion, Boy Cantada, Nonoy Dionisio and Jet Sison of the Ateneo UAAP champion basketball teams of 2007-08; cookware and basketball player Edwin Chow; volleyball and track greats Lori Basilan and Lany Gochuico and the late Bernie Vidaluz, a sports director of the 60s.

I can be thrilled that my picture will be placed in the gallery of sports greats alongside those I have idolized and worked with like Ato Caruada, Dick Ildefonso and Jun Bernardino. I am perhaps the only non-athlete among these breakthroughs, having been placed by the school.

And yes, I am grateful for the gift of sports from my school.

* * *

It allowed me to be on the sidelines supporting or cowering athletes while at the same time receiving invaluable lessons about sportsmanship and character.

In high school, I helped run the tournaments, was a cheerleader and a manager of the NCAA champion Ateneo junior volleyball team of 1974. In college, I was still a cheerleader but added sportswriting for the Collegian, the school paper.

Being on the sidelines of great men was the next best thing to being actually on the playing field with schoolmates.

Later on, those experiences merged with lessons gained from work in public relations, advertising and production.

This led to a break and consuming 25 years ago from Manage Enterprises to broadcast for PBA, and from there I have covered college basketball, Manny Pacquiao in Las Vegas, boxing in the provinces and Philippine participation in international competitions.

My involvement in sports has given me the opportunity to share sports insights with you in that space. I got my share of delightful surprise calls and the invitation made by beauty queen editor Tedyrie Melendres nine year ago to pen this column is definitely one of the most special.

This wonderful journey began in school.

Many of us dream of being an athlete but not everyone is physically blessed or gets the breaks. Just being where athletes are and on their playing fields is just as fulfilling.

Cheering, cowering or managing your gilled school mates allows you to watch years of games. Being a part of a champion high school team as a student manager gives you memories for a lifetime.

These are part of our education. It is a blessing when sports and other passions like theater, music or social work allow us to grow outside the classroom.

To my alma mater, thank you for letting me be part of chapters of your sports history, the courage to make sports a career and this honor you now give.

No-nonsense Blue Eagles power past Falcons

From page A24

"To date, we devised a system where we start with two rookies and the veterans will be coming off the bench. And I think the players are responding well. I see a great future with my rookies."

Mariano, the nephew of former PBA guard Eliezo Mariano, burned all his 12 points from beyond the arc to pace La Salle's balanced charge. He also accounted for four of La Salle's 13 steals.

"I'm comfortable with my shooting and my range," said Mariano, an 18-year-old sophomore who stained up for the suspended youth team.

Salamat topscored with 16 points, including nine of Ateneo's first 12 in the second half as the Eagles roared, 49-28.

Reyes, who added 13 rebounds, burned two crucial triples in the final four minutes after the Falcons twice threatened within five points.

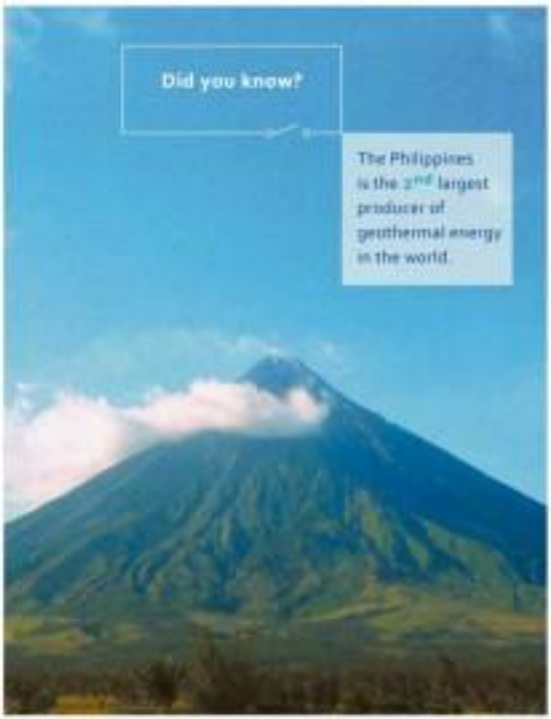
La Salle extended its runaway over NU to an overall record of 44-3, with the Bulldogs last whooping against the Archers in Aug. 2003.

Print powered by

SPORTS

No-nonsense Eagles power past Falcons

WELL-covered by dancers Nico Salva and Manny Ramos, Adamson's Louise Alvarez shoots a drive and rounds to a pass to teammate Allan Santos (left) in yesterday's game. ALEXIS SOLIVEN



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Archers rip Bulldogs

By Jacinto W. Flor

ATENEO'S MAN-MAN WAS HELD TO HIS LOWEST OUTPUT but the Blue Eagles unwind another upset with a 63-51 triumph over the Adamson Falcons yesterday in the UAAP men's basketball tournament at the Araneta Coliseum.

Strong guards Ish Saitman and Jai Reyes stepped up for the struggling Falcons. All-hustler Ito Rosales-ing in key baskets in the second half as the Eagles witnessed the solo lead with a 4-1 record.

"This was a very difficult win for us because we're coming off a loss to supposedly the weakest team in the league," said coach Norman Black, four days after the Eagles absorbed a 68-58 shocker from the erstwhile winless University of the Philippines Maroons.

"It's not just the physical part of it that you have to get back, it's also the mental part. The fact that for the last few days people have been pretty down on us, we have to show that we can bounce back.

"We talked about adversity and how to handle it. And I think the team did a good job in handling adversity the past days."

All-Ateneo, the reigning Most Valuable Player, scored his lowest output of the year with six points on 1-3 of-12 shooting.

All-Ateneo's lowest production came in a July 2008 game, also against the Falcons, when he shot only two points on a 1-of-9 clip.

The La Salle-Green Archers had an easier time in blasting the luckless U Bulldogs, 66-48, in the first game for their third straight triumph after an unexpected 0-2 start.

The Archers, who got going with a youthful first five that included rookies Jeremel Mocon and Kevin Ortiguza, held the Bulldogs scoreless in the first seven minutes of play for an early 12-0 advantage.

"We were able to dictate the tempo from the opening salvo," said La Salle coach Franz Pumaren.

"I think we made the necessary adjustments. If you look at the first two games, all the breaks we were scoring something. Maybe the rookies got more presence coming off the bench.

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Llamzon

DID YOU KNOW

BEFORE Americans occupied Manila, the city had no professional firefighters. Firefighting was done by the entire community in the spirit of *dayanihan*.

Cyril L. Bonalaste /Inquirer Research

GARBAGE spills into a creek as part of a perimeter fence surrounding a landfill in Rodriguez, Rizal collapses on Wednesday due to incessant rains. Story on page A2A.

Telco refusal to give records stalls probe

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE INVESTIGATION BEING CONducted by the Manila police into two cases has hit a snag following the refusal of a telecommunications company to provide probers with the victims' phone records, a police official said yesterday.

Chief Insp. Erwin Margarejo, Manila Police District (MPD) homicide section head, said the phone records were vital to the resolution of the two cases—the slay attempt on an official of the Manila International Container Port (MICP) which left his employee dead and the murder of a talent manager.

He added that the telecommunications firm, in refusing to provide police investigators access to its records, invoked the right to privacy of its subscribers.

Margarejo, however, said the cell phone records of the victims could provide them information that could lead to the resolution of the cases.

"I was informed by [the company] that their legal division asked

TELCO | A2A

Part of landfill perimeter wall collapses

By Beverly T. Mendridad

PART OF THE PERIMETER WALL of a 19-hectare sanitary landfill in Rodriguez town, Rizal, collapsed on Wednesday night due to continuous rains in the area.

Fortunately, no one was hurt and there was no damage to property as a result of the collapse, Rizal public information chief Anthony Miano said in an interview.

"Everything is under control. There is no damage to life or property in the area," Miano told the Inquirer yesterday.

A photo taken of the site, however, showed garbage from the landfill spilling into a nearby creek due to the breach in the perimeter fence (see related photo on page A11).

Miano said the provincial government was moving to repair the structure as soon as possible since the weather in the area improves.

The perimeter wall, consisting of a thick layer of soil, acts as a protective barrier to keep the garbage thrown into the landfill from spilling over, he added.

He said the wall probably collapsed due to incessant rains which loosened the soil.

NO-LOOK STANCE
A member of the riot police runs trying to ignore a protester during a rally near the US Embassy in Manila on Thursday to protest President Barack Obama's meeting in Washington with President Macapagal-Arroyo. The protesters urged Obama not to support world leaders, including Ms Arroyo, whose governments are allegedly corrupt and repressive.

Videoke bar owner stabbed dead by pal

By Nancy C. Carvajal

SCOLDING A DRINKING BUDDY over cigarette butts proved to be fatal for a videoke bar owner.

Case officer PO3 Rodel Tomangday of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit identified the victim as Myrna Cuevas, 43, owner of a videoke bar on Central Road, Barangay Payatas in Quezon City.

Tomangday said Castillo was stabbed dead by one of her drinking buddies who was identified only as Ana.

Witnesses told the police that before the stabbing incident, the two were drinking inside the bar.

At one point, the victim started yelling at Ana, berating her for throwing cigarette butts at her.

The two started arguing and Ana walked out of the bar but returned after several minutes holding a knife which she allegedly used in the attack, witnesses added.

The victim's live-in partner, Leo Gonzales, saw the incident and wrestled the knife away from Ana before she could inflict more injuries on the victim.

Police said Ana escaped after the incident.

The victim, on the other hand, was rushed to the East Avenue Medical Center where she was declared dead on arrival due to two stab wounds in the chest.

People's council to watch over QC gov't deals eyed

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON CITY COUNCILOR wants to create a people's council to keep an eye on the city government to ensure its accountability and transparency.

In a proposed ordinance, Councilor Jorge Banal Jr. said the people's council would be composed of private groups, civil society organizations and other similar groups.

Banal said the council would not only play the role of a watchdog but would also give civil society groups a more active role in the city government's affairs.

It will also act as the people's representative to the city government, the proposed measure said.

The measure was passed on third and final reading on July 20 and is now awaiting the signature of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr.

Under the proposed ordinance, the people's council will also be allowed to participate in policy formulation processes.

It will also be granted "observer status" by having access to various city departments in order to check on the regularity of the city government's transactions.

All partnerships and contracts entered into with the city government shall be subject to compliance with the national accounting and auditing procedures," part of the proposed measure said.

It added that a memorandum of agreement between the city government and the people's council would be signed on "ensure accountability and transparency of funds management."

NBI to summon Belo on botched butt job

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF Investigation (NBI) will summon cosmetic surgeon Vicki Belo and other representatives of the Belo Medical Group (BMG) regarding the reported botched butt augmentation surgery which allegedly almost killed a former patient at their clinic.

Ron Rankins, executive officer of the NBI office of the Deputy Director for Intelligence Services (DDIS), told the Inquirer that Belo was identified by 40-year-old businesswoman Josefina Norvio as a consultant at the time she was still deciding to undergo the operation.

"Based on the complaint, Norvio initially consulted Belo about the operation and was not informed of any side effects of the surgery before she agreed to undergo butt augmentation," the grey," Rankins said.

Belo and a representative from the BMG will be summoned next week, the NBI said.

Rankins said that apart from getting Belo's side on the case, the cosmetic surgeon will also be asked about the BMG's claim on their website that hydrogel is a "permanent filler."

Norvio had filed a complaint against the BMG after she alleged that her operation done on her in 2003 and 2005 at the Belo Medical Clinic left her with an infection on her buttocks requiring a series of surgeries for the removal of pus and the ruptured hydrogel implant used.

2 more jail escapees recaptured

By Beverly T. Mendridad

TWO MORE ESCAPEES FROM the Cabanatuan City North Police Station prison were re-arrested yesterday morning.

Senior Supt. Jude Sacino, city police chief, said Cesareo Calondo and Marvin Jose Ramon, as earlier reported, Sacino were picked up in the Purok Compound in Tondo, Manila, at about 2 a.m. yesterday.

This brought to seven the number of fugitives recaptured since 11 more bailed the police prison in Cabanatuan, Cabanatuan North on Tuesday.

Five of the escapees were re-arrested on Wednesday in police operations conducted in Bulacan and in Batangas and Cavite provinces.

They were identified as Pedro Ramos, Rolando Hernandez, Noli Bautista, Jaybenar Ambos and Ryan Peñaflor.

Sacino said they have sent police teams in Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija to verify information that the remaining six fugitives were hiding there.

The jailbreak earlier prompted the National Capital Region Police Office to order the temporary relief of Supt. Florendo Quitoriano, Cabanatuan's deputy chief of police and concurrent commander of the Cabanatuan City North Police Station.

New coop told: Be transparent in your deals

FORMER SENATOR AND FILIPINO Cooperative Centers chair Agapito "Butz" Aquino has welcomed the entry of Apo Credit Cooperative into the cooperative movement but urged its officials to ensure transparency in its operations in order, he said, to gain the full confidence of its members.

Aquino, in a statement, said he is aware that Apo Credit Cooperative has entered into some form of a tie-up with PNB-Savings Bank. Under the deal, a personnel from the cooperative will assist the allegedly dormant bank's clients. Last month, the Supreme Court ruled that Banco Filipino no longer authorized to operate based on a complaint filed by the financial watchdog Cooperative Development Authority.

Aquino said there appears to be no legal impediment to the tie-up "so long as the funds and resources of Apo Credit are not compromised or strained, and the operations of the cooperative are conducted with full transparency."

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From page A25

for a court order to allow us to obtain [their phone] records but how can we get a court order when we are still conducting the investigation?" he said.

He likened the situation to the "chicken and egg" argument, saying the police could not get a court order unless they first establish probable cause, which they would not be able to do without the phone records.

In the July 26 death of 39-year-old executive employee Melchor Magsaysay, a staffer of MECP legal division head Eduardo Ibera, the latter told the police he had received a death threat through text message two days before armed men opened fire on his vehicle. He also said that he, and not Magsaysay, was the target of the gunmen.

In the second case, then Senator Manuelo Manuelo, talent manager and owner of Body Plus Modelling and Talent Production, was killed and killed in his home on July 21, a witness claimed that he had overheard the suspected killer talk to the victim on his cell phone.

"The phone records are vital to the solution of these cases because they would give us leads to the identification of the killers. We need the help of the telecommunications company to solve these killings," Magsaysay said.

METROBRIEFS

Naked, decomposing body fished out of creek

HOMICIDE investigators have yet to identify a man whose naked and decomposing body was fished out of a creek on Wednesday in Manila. Police said the body was discovered at around 12:20 p.m. floating in the Estero de Sabluyan in Tondo. The victim was between 30 and 35 years old, 5' 5" tall, with medium build and a "Rosita" tattoo on his right shoulder. Jeannette I. Andrade

Fake baseball caps worth P103M seized

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agents seized on Wednesday some P103 million worth of fake baseball caps or simulacrums cards on a store and a distributor in Manila and Pasay cities. The agents confiscated 60,000 counterfeit baseball caps from P.D. Tordesillas Merchandise at the Baclaran Terminal Plaza Mall and its distributor in Binondo. The raids stemmed from the complaint of New York-based New Era Cap Company. Jeannette I. Andrade

SM WELCOMES PWDS
In celebration of National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week, SM Supermalls, led by its president Annie Garcia (standing, fourth from left), recently welcomed persons with disabilities (PWDs) at the newly built Toy Dome in the SM Manila Bike Garden in Quezon City. SM Supermalls' participation in the event is part of its SM Cares corporate social responsibility program.

Eight years of PCSO Accelerated Impact under President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

ORGANIZATIONAL REACH

As of 2008, PCSO has branched out into 33 Provincial District Offices in strategic locations – 7 in Northern and Central Luzon, 9 in Southern Tagalog and Bicol Region and 8 in the Visayas and Mindanao.

These PDOs act as mini-PCSOs in the regions to reach a vast majority of Filipinos.

REVENUE PERFORMANCE

From 2001-2008, sales from lottery operations more than tripled, from 7% P billion in 2001 to P32.4 billion in 2008.

The past eight years has seen phenomenal growth in lotto revenues. This performance is made more significant by the fact that sales declined by 9% between 1999 and 2000, the last year of the short-lived Estrada Administration.

Despite economic hardships encountered, in the last four years alone, lotto revenues doubled from P11.1 billion (2004) to P22.4 billion (2008).

In 2008 the combined sales from lotto and sweepstakes was P32.4 billion, out of which P12.2 billion in taxes were paid. PCSO has consistently been Quezon City's top revenue taxpayer.

CHARITY ASSISTANCE

The growth in revenues has enabled the PCSO to expand its charity services significantly.

By law, PCSO allocates its resources as follows: a Prize Fund of 45%, an Operating Fund of 15% and a Charity Fund of 30%.

The 30% charity fund is being used in support of the following programs and services:

- Mandatory cash dole outs
- Individual assistance programs & services
- Institutional financial assistance programs
- Special programs

THE INDIVIDUAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Individual Medical Assistance Program (IMAP) provides direct medical assistance to individual patients through financial aid to be addressed to:

- hospitals for hospitalization expenses, medicines, medical supplies, tests and other laboratory procedures.
- other health facilities/centers for dialysis, chemotherapy sessions, imaging aids, bone aids or bionic implants, prosthesis and prosthetic devices.

Since 1999 when IMAP started, PCSO has served 477,000 indigent patients for a total amount of P5.14 billion in fund assistance.

Two-thirds of these patients (67%), or 281,119 were served in the eight-year period from 2001- 2008.

The previous eight-year period from 1992-2000 accounted for only one-third of the total patients served.

An average assistance of P32,370 was given per patient in 2001-2008.

Total assistance directly provided in the same period was P6.74 billion.

A holistic and streamlined approach has been adopted to enhance support and speed up processing of requests for assistance.

THE ENDOWMENT FUND PROGRAM

The Endowment Fund Program provides funding to hospitals and other health agencies so they can serve more charity patients.

From 1999 to 2008 a total of 1,360 health agencies have been provided Endowment Funds in the combined amount of P1.49 billion.

Sixty percent (60%) of this total amount was provided from 2001-2008.

From 2001-2008, a total of 582 health agencies were provided Post-Endowment Fund Partner agencies nationwide.

Among the beneficiaries in the Endowment Fund Program is the province of leading by the Peacemaker Project of the PCSO Rotary Club of Manila Bay-Philippine Japan Senate Foundation.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS/ SERVICES

- **Outpatient Consultation Services by the Charity Clinic Department**
- **Pulmonary Tuberculosis Program**

From 2001-2008, alleviated the health condition of 4,148 patients with Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

- **Program for Indigent Special Children**

From 2004 – 2008, the program has covered 6,181 Special Children who availed of a total of 31,043 various services and referred tests.

- **Medical, Dental and Special Missions**

From 2001- 2008, PCSO provided 1,036,719 patients with free medical and dental consultation and management, and free medicines. Eighty-three (83%) of these patients, or 852,256 were served in 2001-2008.

INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Under the Institutional Financial Assistance Programs, PCSO extends National Government, LGUs, NGOs, Socio-Civic Groups and other institutions that undertake charity, pro-poor programs and activities in the areas of health, medical and welfare.

In particular, the Medicine Donation Program has provided P387 million worth of medicines to Government Organizations, non-government organizations and socio-civic organizations and events since 2004.

PCSO also provides Regular Assistance (Government and Non-Government Organizations which are called Regular Beneficiaries or Partners), 600 Welfare and Health-Related Programs.

At present, there are 10 LGUs and NGOs considered as Partners of PCSO including the Philippine National Red Cross, Caritas Manila, Hospicio de San Jose, Tahanang Walang Hagdanan, Boys Town and Girls Town, being provided with regular financial assistance.

The amount of P320 million were transferred to these partners from 2001- 2008.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS/ PROJECTS

The Special Programs/Projects is another scheme of providing grants to worthwhile undertakings that have been approved by the Office of the President and the PCSO Board, Chairman and General Manager, particularly those outside of PCSO's regular programs and services.

The Ambulance Donation Program has provided 4,122 ambulances units to hospitals, municipal health centers and other local facilities.

Forty (40) mobile clinic units have also been provided.

Under the PCSO-PhilHealth Greater Medical Access (EMA) Program – a joint undertaking of the PCSO, PhilHealth and the LGUs – a total of 6.4 million indigent families were enrolled with the amount of P3.6 billion as funding for the GAP share since the year 2005.

As a member of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC) and in coordination in the Poverty Alleviation Program of the Arroyo Administration, PCSO has been providing medicines and financial assistance, and undertaking medical and dental missions in various Kapit- Bisig Lakas sa Kahirapan (KALAHI) Convergence nationwide.

To help address medical brain drain in the country, a priority concern of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, the PCSO, in partnership with the Department of Health, provides a five-year medical education assistance through the Pinoy MD Scholarship Program to qualified students who are committed to serve as medical professionals in the country.

A total of P45M has been committed for this purpose. Since 2006, P22.5 million had been allocated for 236 Pinoy MD Scholars.

The Center for Life Improvement and Health Development (CELID) Home Project, is a multi-faceted health and social development undertaking of the Holy Spirit Foundation, PCSO, Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Technological Livelihood and Innovation Center (TLIC), PTSI-Quezon Institute, and other institutions with the goal of "lessening the burden" of the families of people with cancer and/or other dreaded diseases, by providing a place for patients and their caretakers to stay.

The eight (8) storey project, a total of 314 patients have been provided with care facility and services since 2006.

This is apart from individual financial assistances to these patients.

The PCSO, in partnership with DOH, PITC, NFA, League of Municipalities and National Development Corporation, among others, provided funding to implement President Arroyo's low-cost medicine program.

Under this program, drugs and medicines are made available through government hospital pharmacies, Botika ng Barangay outlets, and NFA rolling stores, at affordable prices.

A total of P100.5 million was funded for this undertaking since its initiation in 2003.

Recently, PCSO reached out to patients, using the church into-faith community as a medium, by funding the Botika sa Parokya and the Pagamot sa Parokya projects.

A total of P6.5 million was allocated to medicines and P 12.6 million for rice in 2008.

PCSO has also provided medical, relief and other forms of assistance to victims of calamities and disasters (P18.2 M from 2004 - 2008).

A total of P683.4 million was allocated for the upgrading of hospital and medical equipments.

The WORLD

Julie Lorraine B. Garcia

JI claims bombings of Jakarta hotels

JAKARTA, INDONESIA—POLICE WERE INVESTIGATING the origin of an Internet message claiming responsibility for twin hotel bombings in Indonesia's capital nearly two weeks ago. The group calling itself al-Qaida Indonesia said the attacks targeted the American business community.

The message surfaced on Wednesday and was purported to be signed by Noordin Mohammed Top, a key terrorist suspect in Southeast Asia. It said the attacks were carried out by a splinter faction of the al-Qaida-linked regional militant group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI).

An expert on regional terrorism said the language resembles previous claims by Muslim extremist groups and may be authentic.

The splinter group has been considered the most likely perpetrators of the hotel attacks. An unexploded bomb recovered from the scene resembled devices used by the group before and documents seized from members indicated they intended to hit government Web sites.

Police said they were investigating the message, but were not sure if it was truly from Malaysian Fugitive Noordin, or if it will provide new clues to the base for those responsible for the blasts that killed 7 and wounded more than 50 at the JW Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels.

The statement, which surfaced the same day the bombs supposed for giants would right-wing security said the bombings targeted the US business community and "infidels who fight Islam and Muslims."

The July 17 attacks in Jakarta's upscale business district have forced Indonesia to reevaluate its widely praised fight against virulent Islamists, which combined a "soft" social element of deradicalization with the systematic arrests of hundreds of suspected militants.

Written in Arabic and Indonesian, the message was posted on a previously unknown website on Sunday and ensured no follow-up by posting footage of the carnage.

Brian spokesperson Sidiyo Ishak said they are trying to authenticate it as part of their inquiries into the blasts, which broke a four-year lull in terror attacks in the world's most populous Muslim nation. He said they would track down the terrorists using all means.

Noordin is accused of planning four previous attacks in Indonesia that killed more than 240 people. He group claimed responsibility for last year of those, unless might be responsible in Bali in 2005—in a similar note.

The statement said the twin bombings were carried out in honor of Azahari bin Husin, a top JI bomb maker who was fatally shot by counterterrorism forces in November 2005, and Saifudin Zuhri, another explosives expert who was killed in April 2006 during a raid on a safehouse hideout in central Java.

The men are believed to have played crucial roles in the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005, an attack on the JW Marriott in 2003 and a truck bombing at the Australian Embassy in 2004. AP

Suu Kyi supporters brace for the worst

RANGOON—SUPPORTERS OF Aung San Suu Kyi have stood by since the night two dozens of resistance to Burma's (Myanmar's) junta—but fears of a guilty verdict in the trial of their icon are growing too much for some.

Many female members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) were at the party's headquarters after a court announced Tuesday that it would pass judgement on Suu Kyi at the end of the week, party sources and witnesses said.

They said they feared that the ruling junta will use the new case years on charges of allowing an American man who swam to her lakeside house...on top of the 14 years out of the last 20 that she has already spent in detention.

"We wished as we feel really sorry for her to see home. But we will remember her symbolic we should hope for the best and prepare for the worst," Aye Aye Mu, a senior NLD party member said.

"We felt so sad when we heard the verdict will come. Our leader is always thinking for the benefit of the country. Although we know how the words will come out one day, we never do anything apart from pray for her release."

Judges at the court in Rangoon's notorious Insein prison, where 64-year-old Suu Kyi has been held since May closed the trial on Tuesday after lawyers for blood delivering final arguments.

Suu Kyi is accused of heavily by the terms of her house arrest by allowing US national John Yettaw to stay at her home after he swam in Inseincreek flippers in her concluding villa.

Yettaw is also expected on Friday as the stand-witnesses records of two of Suu Kyi's female aides who lived with her at the property, and of Yettaw himself.

In a cruel irony Yettaw was detained just days before the latest, six-year period of her house arrest was due to expire, giving the ruling generals a ready-made excuse to extend her detention.

Critics have accused the ruling generals of trying to keep the Nobel Peace Prize winner locked up during general elections promised by the regime some time during 2010.

They will be the first poll in Burma since the NLD swept to a landslide victory in 1990, a result which the junta refused to recognise before launching a massive campaign of repression against pro-democracy activists.

With many of its senior members behind bars, in ill health or simply old, the NLD's machine has, more than ever, become the figurehead for peaceful resistance to the Army's 47-year rule over the impoverished country. AFP

SUU KYI in photo taken on Aug. 5, 1998. The now-but 64-year-old, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, faces up to five years in jail when a prison court sentences her on July 31 on charges of breaching the terms of her seemingly endless house arrest. —

A low-tech solution to warming: White roofs

SAN FRANCISCO—RETURNing to their south house in Sacramento after a long summer weekday, Jon and Kim Waldrop were routinely met by a wall of heat.

"We'd come home in the summer and the house would be 115 degrees, sizzling," said Waldrop, a regional manager for a national company. He or his wife would race to the thermostat and turn on the air-conditioning as their four small children, just picked up from day care, sweated relief.

All that changed last month. "Now we come home on days when it's over 100 degrees outside, and the house is at 80 degrees," Waldrop said.

Their solution was a new roof: a shiny plasticized white covering that experts say is not only an energy saver but a way to help cool the planet.

Relying on the silhouettes old principle that white objects absorb less heat than dark ones, homeowners like the Waldrops are in the vanguard of a movement affirming "cool roofs" as one of the most affordable weapons against climate change.

Studies show that white roofs reduce air-conditioning costs by 20 percent or more on hot, sunny weather. Lower energy consumption also means fewer of the carbon-dioxide emissions that contribute to a global warming.

What is more, a white roof may last only 15 percent more than its dark counterpart, depending on the materials used.

Energy Secretary Steven Chu, a Nobel laureate in physics, has popularized the cool roofs at home and abroad. "Make it white," he advised a television audience on Comedy Central's "Daily Show" last week.

The scientist he calls his hero, Art Rosenfeld, is a member of the California Energy Commission who has been campaigning for cool roofs since the 1980s, argues that treating all of the world's roofs "right" over the next 20 years could save the equivalent of 24 billion metric tons in carbon dioxide emissions.

"That is what the whole world emitted last year," he said. "So, in a sense, it's like turning off the world for a year." New York Times

New tensions as N. Korea seizes S. Korean fishing boat

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA ON Thursday seized a navy South Korean fishing boat and its four crew members, touching off tensions after a week of aggressive jabbs casting from the communist regime.

South Korea called for the immediate return of the crew and their 20-ton squid-fishing vessel called "909 Yeonan," but there was no sign yet that the North was moving on release them. Seoul's military said another vessel was missing.

The seizure of the boat followed claims by Pyongyang to reinforce against sanctions imposed after nuclear and missile tests, and a warning of "all-out war" ahead of US-South Korean military drills next month.

The 909 Yeonan was towed by a North Korean patrol boat after it strayed into the North's waters at 6:27 am (2127 GMT Wednesday), Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff office said.

The South's boat was presumed to have sailed off course owing to a faulty global positioning system and was being taken towards the North's eastern port of Jangjin, it said.

The vessel was initially taken to the North's Kosong county according the return of the navy South Korean fishing boat, but there was no response," a spokesperson at the office told AFP.

Seoul's unification ministry also demanded that the boat and its crew be returned "as soon as possible" in a telephone message to the North, spokesperson Chun Hae-Sung told reporters in a briefing.

"The North confirmed its reception of the message, saying it would inform things out and get back to us," the other ministry official said.

Despite Pyongyang's recently bellicose rhetoric, the rival Koreas do have a record of returning fishing boats that mariners stray into the wrong side of the border.

Two South Korean fishing boats—one in April 2007, and the other in December 2006—accidentally strayed into North Korean waters but were soon repatriated. Two South Korean boats were also promptly returned earlier this year.

Tensions on the Korean peninsula have soared following the communist state's missile and nuclear tests, which resulted in tougher UN sanctions and a renewed standoff with the United States.

North Korea's defense minister warned of "all-out war" at the weekend, ahead of the Aug. 17-27 Ulchi Freedom Guardian annual exercise between the US and South Korean militaries.

The drill "may lure the black-hearted into kicking before pounding and thunder," the North's Korean Central News Agency said.

Relations have deteriorated since South Korea's President Lee Myung-bak took office in 2008, promising a tougher stance towards the North. AFP

Trustee sues Ruth Madoff for nearly $45M

BRIEF LIST THE PENTHOUSE ON New York's Upper East Side, the compound in Palm Beach, Florida, the home in Montauk on Long Island and the house in the south of France. The yacht, the Mercedes, the Bentley convertible coupe, the Embraery planes—all gone.

But after forfeiting nearly $60 million to assets, Ruth Madoff, the wife of one of the biggest swindlers on Wall Street history, is being sued for millions more.

The trustee who is trying to recover money for investors cheated by Bernard L. Madoff sued Ruth Madoff on Wednesday for $44.8 million. The trustee, Irving H. Picard, claimed Ruth Madoff received tens of millions of dollars from her husband's investment firm, enabling her to live a "life of opulence."

Madoff's lawyer, Peter A. Chaviris, said he was baffled by the suit and noted that she had not been implicated in the fraud. The authorities allowed her to keep $2.5 million—a small fraction of the fortune that her husband amassed while orchestrating a vast global Ponzi scheme.

But Picard, in his complaint, claimed that Madoff had no "good faith basis" to believe she was entitled to the money she received over the years from Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities. Three days before Bernard Madoff confessed last December, that his cohorts transferred $44 million from the firm's bank account to a real-estate partnership in which she owned a stake, according to the complaint.

Madoff's lawyer scoffed short of saying that Ruth Madoff was aware of the fraud, he said she nonetheless profited from financial ties to her husband's firm.

"Ruth Madoff was never an employee" of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities, "yet millions of dollars" belonging to part of the firm and its customers "found their way into her personal accounts and investments without any legitimate business purpose or any value" to the firm "simply because of her relationship with Bernard Madoff," Picard said in the complaint.

Under federal bankruptcy law, Picard can seek to recover assets withdrawn from the company up to six years before it filed for bankruptcy. He may also try to reclaim the $2.5 million the government has allowed Ruth Madoff to keep.

So far, the trustee has sued about a dozen entities and individuals, including overseas hedge funds, seeking about $1.4 billion in assets that were withdrawn from the Madoff firm before its collapse. At the end of June, Picard had recovered about $1.08 billion in assets. New York Times

RUTH MADOFF —

Working women first to be axed in slowdown

BANGKOK—WHEN A MAJOR outerwear factory in Bangkok found its sales plummeting in the downturn, it laid off more 1,900 workers, almost all of them women.

That didn't surprise labor activists who say women are the most vulnerable workers in economies, especially in low-wage industries in developing countries where gender equality lags.

"Even before the crisis, there were differences in the jobs for men and men," said Gyorgy Sziraczki, a senior economist in the International Labor Organization's Asia-Pacific headquarters.

"Fewer women are working than men, and women also have a much larger share of vulnerable employment. The crisis is a crystallization but widened the gap."

Garment worker Chulaf Chaisaeng is a case in point. After working for 15 years at the Bangkok outerwear factory, she is struggling to support her two children, ill husband and parents with her severance pay of 118,000 baht (around $3,300).

"I did not expect the company to do this. I am a good worker," said Chaisaeng.

Millions of female workers across the region will face Chaisaeng's plight, according to economists and activists who say women, especially those in low-skilled contract and temporary employment, are particularly susceptible to the downturn.

The latest figures by Asia by the International Labor Organization (ILO) project a 0.7 percent rise in unemployed women in 2009, compared to 0.4 percent for men.

Lucita Perez Jayasekera of Committee for Asian Women, a Bangkok-based network of over 40 women's groups in 14 Asian countries, said women will bear the majority of the up to 27 million expected to lose their jobs in the Asia-Pacific in 2009.

"Because the sectors that are affected are the manufacturing sector, tourist sector and migrant workers, it will be at least 80 to 90 percent women," she said.

"We have a growing informal sector and a growing migrant population [predominantly women], completely unprotected by legislation or any form of social security."

However in Asia, the concentration of women in export-driven industries such as garments, textiles and electronics, which have been hit hardest by the crisis, is much higher than men.

Wage gaps between men and women, a factor cited by studies as perceived breadwinners and the multiple roles women play today have also made female workers more vulnerable, experts say. Reuters

Facing 40 lashes, Sudan woman to give up immunity to stand trial

KHARTOUM, SUDAN—A 33-dozen female journalist facing 40 lashes for wearing trousers in public in violation of the country's strict Islamic laws told a packed Khartoum courtroom Wednesday she is resigning from a UN job that grants her immunity to the sun challenge the law on women's public dress code.

Lubna Hussein was among 13 women arrested July 3 in a raid by members of the public order police force on a popular Khartoum restaurant. The women, convicted indecent by the state's interpretation of Islamic law adopted by Sudan's Islamic regime. All but three of the women were flogged at a police station over dress laws.

But Hussein and two other women decided they wanted to go to trial and Hussein invited human rights workers, western diplomats and fellow journalists to Wednesday's hearing.

Some of her women friends cheered as she exited Wednesday wearing trousers in a show of support.

"This is not a case about me wearing pants," said Hussein, who works in the media department of the UN Mission in Sudan and coordinates opinion pieces for a left-leaning Khartoum newspaper.

"This is a case about me stalling the article that addresses women's dress code, under the title of indecent acts. This is my battle. This article is against

HUSSEIN

the constitution and even against Islamic law itself," she said after the hearing.

Judge Mudathir Rashid adjourned the hearing until Aug. 4 to give Hussein time to quit her job.

Hussein said she would immediately quit and thanked the UN for intervening to spare her possible punishment.

She said the UN mission was trying to stand by her, invoking a clause in an agreement between the Sudanese government and the world body's representatives in Sudan that obliges authorities to ask permission before starting legal proceedings against a member of its staff.

When asked about the case, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon described himself as "deeply concerned" and said flogging was a violation of international human rights treaties.

"The UN will take every effort to ensure that the rights of its staff members are protected," Ban told reporters in Geneva.

Hussein's defense lawyer, Nabil Adeeb, said the UN wanted to protect its staff, but Hussein insisted her trial to proceed.

"We have overwhelming laws on her," he said. Hussein, the first of at least 40 lashes, according to Adeeb.

Islamic Sharia law has been strictly implemented in Sudan since an army coup led by President Omar al-Bashir seized power in 1989, toppling an elected but ineffective government. Activists and lawyers say the implementation of the law is arbitrary.

Public order cases usually involve quick summary trials with sentences carried out shortly afterward, in way the Hussein's trial, due to the 13 women arrested earlier this month. They were flogged and fined 250 Sudanese pounds, or about $110.

Women in the mostly Arab and Muslim northern Sudan, particularly in the capital Khartoum, dress in ankle-length outfits that include a shawl over their head and shoulders. Western clothes is uncommon.

Still, the raid on a Khartoum cafe popular with journalists and foreigners was unusual. AP

Iran to try poll 'rioters'; opposition vows defiance

TEHRAN—TWENTY PEOPLE accused of rioting in the wake of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's disputed reelection as president last month will be put on trial, Iran's official IRNA news agency reported on Wednesday.

The move came as opposition leaders vowed to continue defying the authorities and pay their respects at the graves of slain protesters.

IRNA said their 20 suspected rioters would face trial from Saturday, following the release of scores of protesters rounded up after the June 12 presidential election vote. Ahmadinejad's June 12 victory.

They face charges including bombings, carrying weapons, attacking Basij militiamen and security forces and forcing entrance with exiled opposition group the People's Mujahedeen.

"They are also charged with attacking military units and universities, sending pictures to enemy media, organizing thugs and rioters, vandalizing public and state property including destroying banks and houses," IRNA said.

However, Iran's ombudsman Ghorbani did Dawi Najafabadi also announced that a "considerable" number of protestors would be freed by Friday.

Di Imam says of Mohsi Rihay Ghaleia on Wednesday urged Iran to release prisoners held after the protests.

"We believe that it is imperative for the authorities to release political prisoners," she told a Washington news conference with British Foreign Secretary David Miliband.

On Tuesday 140 protestors were freed, while about 200 remain behind bars, including 60 suspected of masterminding unrest, according to one MP who has visited detainees.

Kamyabi-ye Basij, Ismail Ahmadi Moghaddam, was quoted by the Mehr news agency on Wednesday as saying some officers "want to maintain the Basij's stability and they inflicted damage on people while during the unrest."

"Nothing should make our forces break the rest," he added.

The prisoner releases are being seen as gestures to the opposition which has branded Ahmadinejad's landslide election win a fraud.

However, the opposition again expressed defiance over a ban on a planned mourning ceremony for slain protesters scheduled for Thursday at Tehran's Behesht Mohsalla, a venue used regularly for religious functions.

It was unclear whether the Mosalla ceremony would go ahead. AFP

Basque separatists ETA at 'dead end' after 50 years

MADRID—THE ARMED Basque separatist group ETA, which marks its 50th anniversary Friday, is a shadow of its former self following a crackdown in Spain and France, analysts say, pushing a further decline.

The battle—blamed for 825 deaths so far—surged in latest attack early Wednesday, setting off a powerful car bomb outside a police barracks in Burgos in northern Spain, lightly injuring some 60 people and blowing off most of the 14-storey building's facade.

But while the group managed to kill nearly 100 people annually in the 1980s, "now it is five or six attacks per year in our view they exist," said Basque journalist and ETA expert Gotzon Loudiakos.

"ETA is at a dead end. Their only craft is to disclose operations with the government. But time is against them," he said, adding there were around 700 ETA supporters in Spain and another 1500 in neighbouring France.

The group was formed on July 31, 1959 by a group of left-wing nationalist students opposed to Gen. Francisco Franco's right-wing dictatorship, which suppressed the Basque language.

It initially sought to reach its goals through political means but within a decade resorted to violence, mostly shootings and bombings.

The group's first planned killing took place on Aug. 2, 1968 with the shooting of a policeman.

It has since killed over 820 people in Spain as part of its campaign for an independent Basque homeland mainly

PHOTO taken on March 22, 2006 shows members of the armed Basque separatist group ETA declaring a permanent ceasefire in the northern Spanish Basque city of Vitoria. ETA, which marks its 50th anniversary on July 31, is a shadow of its former self, analysts say, predicting a further decline.

pounding parts of northern Spain and southwest France.

Its deadliest attack took place on July 1987 when a car bomb left in the parking lot of a Barcelona supermarket killed 21 people and injured 45 others.

It has attempted to kill Spanish King Juan Carlos and former conservative Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar.

But Florencio Dominguez, the editor in chief of the Basque news agency Vasco Press, who has written several books on Basque issues, said ETA's situation today "reflects great weakness."

"They carry out less and less fatal attacks and are losing a very combative police persecution. ETA will become progressively weaker. It will break up and become a group of bandits, a mafia group," he said.

In mid-2007 ETA called off a 15-month cold-weather hiatus, which it described as "positive peace talks with Spain's central government in Madrid.

Since then Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's Socialist government has taken a hard line, repeatedly ruling out new negotiations while a string of operations by the police and French police have weakened ETA's leadership.

The latest also appears to be losing support among Basques.

Aznar, a new leftist leadership group Batasuna, boosted the number of votes it has in the Basque regional parliament from one to four in regional elections earlier this year in which ETA's banned political wing Batasuna was banned.

"There are signs which provide reason for hope. Hopefully they will continue successfully," said Antxon Abaitua, a professor of International Studies at Deusto's CEU San Pablo University, who also profiled ETA's demise.

"It is becoming more of a criminal group and less of the military leadership of a wider environment," he added. AFP

US senators seek ban on texting while driving

STATES THAT DO NOT BAN texting by drivers could forfeit hundreds of millions of dollars in federal highway funds under legislation introduced Wednesday in the Senate.

Under the measure, states would have two years to outlaw the sending of text and e-mail messages by motorists or lose 25 percent of their highway funds each year until the measure was deployed.

"Studies show this is far more dangerous than talking on a phone while driving or driving while drunk, which is astonishing," said Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., one of four senators to introduce the proposed legislation.

Schumer said the authors were responding to recent studies that have begun to quantify the risks of texting while driving. One study released earlier this week from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that truck drivers face a 23 times greater risk of crash or near crash when texting than when not doing so.

Currently, texting while driving is banned in 14 states, including Alaska, California and New Jersey, as well as the District of Columbia. The legislature in New York recently passed such a measure and sent it to the governor for signature.

Republicans of the midwestern generally happens at the state level. But in the past the federal government has also successfully used the threat of withholding federal highway funds, as Congress did in 1984 to pressure states to raise the minimum drinking age to 21 years.

Schumer said that the legislation is intended to help combat the growing age bias.

The Governors Highway Safety Association, a group that represents state highway safety agencies in every state, opposes texting while driving, but does not support the proposed legislation.

"We oppose distracting states does. Does it not yet a proven effective method for preventing it or texting or cell phone bans," association spokesperson Jonathan Adkins, said.

Safety advocates said that such concerns about enforcement were raised about seat belt laws but argued that the value of such laws—even if they could not be enforced all the time—created awareness about the issue and set societal guidelines for the behavior. AFP

China still world's top executioner

BOAE—THE NUMBER OF prisoners put to death worldwide decreased in 2008, a human rights group says, adding that China remained in position as the world's top executioner.

Executions in the United States were down from last year, while Iran and Saudi Arabia appeared near the top of the list of the world's top executioners, the watchdog group Human Rights Watch said Wednesday in a report about 2008, and the first six months of this year.

The report said that at least 3,727 executions were carried out in 2008, down from 5,051 the year before. It said that 46 countries retained the death penalty last year, three fewer than in 2007, with Burundi and Uzbekistan abolishing capital punishment, and Ghana became establishing itself as a de facto abolitionist by not having carried out any executions for more than 10 years.

The report said China was accountable for at least 5,000 executions—or 87.5 percent of the total—the same estimate as last year.

That estimate is far greater than that given earlier this year by Amnesty International, an international human rights group. Amnesty said China put at least 1,718 people to death in 2008.

Human Rights Watch said its estimates are based on reports by the media and other human rights groups since the exact number of executions in China remains a state secret.

In Beijing, official media reported Wednesday that China's highest court, which reviews all executions orders by lower courts, has called for the death penalty to be used less often and for only the most serious criminal cases. That comes Chief Supreme People's Court could overturn more death penalty sentences from lower courts before they are carried out.

Human Rights Watch said Iran executed at least 346 people last year, down from 317 in 2007, Saudi Arabia put 102 people to death, while in 2007 it executed for 180 executions. As of June 30, the number of executions in the two countries included four minors in Iran and three in Saudi Arabia, in violation of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, the report said.

The Iran-based group also said a large number of executions were based on terrorism charges in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iran and Iraq. China also has repressed as a part of "Islamic and Uighur—a Muslim minority in the country's restive far western region of Xinjiang—as part of the war on terrorism, it said. AP

US plan for swine flu vaccine: Some ahead of the rest

ATLANTA—A PANEL OF HEALTH experts laid out a plan on Wednesday for vaccinating certain people first in the likely event that not enough swine flu vaccine will be available to immunize everyone who wants it. Here is the period range of cases this fall and winter:

The top priority group, 159 million Americans, or about half the population, would include health care workers and emergency medical responders, because their jobs are critical.

It would also include people with the highest risk of complications and severe illness from the new H1N1 virus: pregnant women, children and young adults from 6 months to 24 years, and people ages 25 to 64 with medical problems like asthma, diabetes or heart disease.

The vaccine is also necessary for people caring for infants under 6 months, to prevent them from inheriting the bother, because infants are at high risk but cannot themselves be vaccinated because safety serves young for the vaccine to work.

More people will need two shots for normal flu shot.

Government officials have projected that 120 million doses of swine flu vaccine will be available by October, but some conference participants said they thought that was overly optimistic.

"I think the virus is looking us in the eye, and it will be the virus that's first will intimidate us in the fall," said Dr. William Schaffner, a member of the group and an infectious-disease expert at Vanderbilt University. He said he feared a "double-barreled flu season," with many cases of swine flu in the fall and early winter, and then a seasonal outbreak starting later and peaking in February.

The recommendations were issued at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, a panel of medical experts here across America that advises the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The group decided that if there was a severe shortage of the vaccine, healthy children over 6 months are recommended, one would say adults except pregnant women, health and emergency workers and people caring for infants under 6 months. Those cuts would reduce the number of vaccinations needed in the first round to about 45 million.

The last to be eligible for vaccine will be healthy people over 65, who are least likely to contract swine flu. AFP

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AUDREY Zubiri, wife of Sen. Miguel Zubiri, in Raja Laurel

And the winner is...

Fashion designer derby at the Sona

By Cherche V. Moral

THE FASHION SPECTACLE at the State of the Nation Address (Sona) Monday wasn't as much who looked best as who dressed who. From our perch, it was a fashion designers' derby.

Days before the event, Raja Laurel, interviewed by celebrities, high society and politicians, was interviewed on an early-evening newscast. He said he was making 15 gowns for the Sona. Who knows how many of these were actually worn... some clients are known to order several gowns from different designers they can choose from...last months, 15 for one occasion is nothing short of impressive.

Another designer whose clothes make a formidable presence on the Batasan red carpet is Oral Cabral, chosen by the likes of Sen. Rene Saguisag's wife Lani Mercado and the President's daughter-in-law Atty. Jayda Arroyo.

In a phone chat with us Wednesday, Cabral turned coy when told he must have

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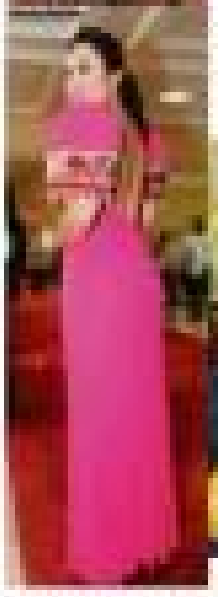
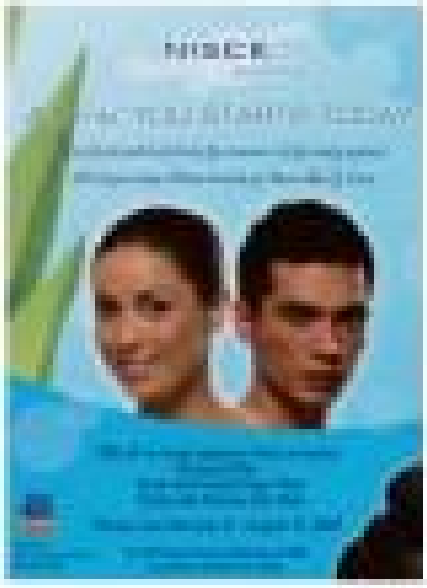


State of the National Dress



Panasonic Launches New DWD Series of Air Conditioners

Anne Curtis' style goes well with her stylish phone

Changing the landscape of New Manila: PineCrest.

When you think of Baguio you imagine rows of pine trees, fresh breeze, and cool climate. You think crisp, clean air. You think it's good for the kids and the grandparents. You imagine a healthy environment including one free from noise pollution buffered by towering trees.

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"We actually imported the trees from Australia and created a nursery in Santa Rosa, so we could populate the development with Pine trees," says Jing Serrano, President of Vista Land & Lifescapes, Inc. *"Most people are surprised that they can grow in our climate,"* she adds. *"PineCrest will live up to its name."*

Perpetual spring will soon be upon New Manila as PineCrest, the low-rise development that sits on almost 8,000 square meters of prime land, is constructed right beside the LRT 2 station.

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Ben Farrales plans to close shop ...

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... but not without these galas. With extraordinary candor, he talks about health, old age —and Pitoy

By Alex T. Vergara

IT'S OFFICIAL. BEN FARRALES, the Dean of Philippine fashion, will close his shop in Manila three years from now.

Born on July 1, 1932, the designer would be 80 years old by then.

"It's something I've long thought about," says Farrales. "I believe I have nothing more to prove. I've gotten almost everything I need in life. It's time to slow down and spend more time with my sons Cesar and Feliciano, and visit friends I haven't seen in a long time."

Farrales, who marked 50 years in fashion seven years ago, as Inquirer archives show, says he's not losing enthusiasm about his decision to leave the scene. But after attending to his clients' needs for more than half a century, the time has come for him to unwind to himself. More so now, he says, that old age has caught up with him.

With trailblazing candor, Farrales admits what has long been an open secret in the industry: his prostate has been making life difficult for him. Although his condition, he says, isn't "life threatening," there are days he wishes his health "could be better."

Apart from physical discomfort, it's the thought that he can't do as much as before that also pains the still mentally active and independently proud Farrales.

"Because of constant trips to the bathroom, there was a time when I had to be fitted with catheter," he says. "The problem was I sometimes forgot to lock it at night. There were times I would wake up in the morning to find my blanket all wet."

That was until his doctors recommended he wear adult diapers. Rather than slow down, Farrales, unmindful of the recurring pain and discomfort, dove deep into work, producing four gala fashion shows in less than a year.

Before 2009 is over, he will do two more

TRADITIONAL Farrales—draped and Muslim-inspired

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SWATCH lady Virgie Ramos welcomes movie-TV star John Lloyd Cruz into the Swatch family.

BALLP Crawford, show director Rowell Santiago, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski and John Lloyd

HOX MEETS HTK Marvin Venosa and Francis Lumen

SUSAN poses with Executive chef Aurora San Diego

SANTIAGO with good friends Sagasa Manila's Tina Santos, Jenny Moore's Grace Tan, Aces Kitano's Jolani Reyes and Philip Cuaycon Jr. of McDonald's.

MATTEO Goldwell, opera in white classic

After raffle, our phone rings—it's Ruffa

INTERIOR Secretary Ronnie Puno and Assistant Secretary Brian Yamsuan

DIANA Angping and Congress President Jerry Angping with the entertainer

HUGS TUMBUHS Cristine Rojas-Reyes and Pinky Tolosa

MELLACHANG administrator Heidi Puno

LAWYER Innocencio Porras toasts birthday boy Rene V. Puno.

PRISCILLA Puno and Jaime Ricardo Puno Sr.

ARCHITECT Boy Bautista, lawyer Antonio Zobel, Bebe Arenas, Bebot Laurel and Leny Ulchiana

THE WELL-RESPECTED enclosed Purcell Lois, mother-in-law Ann Sarno Cruz, husband Rene and Tiger

H ERE IS ONE OF THE country's hottest actors and his movies are breaking box office records. John Lloyd Cruz, the popular leading man, has paired up with a leading search, Swatch.

When women of custom and sub-sinner paleyages Virgie Ramos introduced John Lloyd as the latest star in her Swatch family, people dashed to the chic lounge of the world-class timer and bar. The Establishment at The Fort. Lunch was prepared by Emily's ultra chef, Geoffrey Lubenzo. Swatch's galaxy of stars was there. Mikee Cojuangco looked stunning. So did beautiful Billy Crawford who played host. Ormeibur Marino Gaudiello was looking on holiday, paleyages.

An awesome energy was felt as the clothing leading man finally came out. For the first time, we all learned more about John Lloyd's personal life via a short clip about his travels and family. He likes spending Sundays at home sharing meals with his sisters—a Bed that thrilled National Bookstore matriarch, lovable, grand Socorro Ramos and Malta ambassador in the Philippines, Leonida Vera.

A preview of the fantastic Swatch fall/Winter 2009 collection was held. When asked by Mikee why he chose Swatch, John Lloyd replied: "It's a timepiece that I would really wear. It definitely matches my lifestyle." Actually, another watch line had asked him to be their endorser but he chose Swatch. What was the other brand? Well, my lips are sealed, paleyages.

The real excitement began when John Lloyd announced it was time for the raffle. ABS-CBN's Kristi Lopez was ecstatic when he won his Swatch of choice. But the raffle winner that had every neck craning was eye-catching Isadora editor Liz

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arnaiche

Photos by Alex Yan Hagen using YBA Photo Solutions

Ey. John Lloyd dashed down the stage to thank her the minds she won, while other winners had to go up the stage to get their prizes. I'm sure you all know why.

So do you think it was coincidence that I immediately got a call from my favorite gorgeous beauty queen and pal Raffa Gutierrez asking, "How's everything?" So I told her. Then I asked one of the gals beside me in the table, "What will happen if I shoot Ruffa to in the house?" My friend answered, "That would have been an unbeatable launch!"

But one thing is sure, dahlings. The partnership of John Lloyd and Swatch is a blockbuster. The launch was brilliantly directed by Swatch creative director Rowell Santiago, paleyages.

What an exciting day and 6th month, dahlings.

Double celebrations

Adorable Southern belle Ann Jamie Cruz-Puno, wife of actor lawyer Renato S. Puno, managing partner of Zobanta, Puno and Perez law offices (ZPP), made sure the dinner reception to commemorate two significant events in lawyer Puno's life and career was superbly planned. "Rene" turned 54 years old and celebrated his 25th anniversary as practicing lawyer, dahlings.

Over 200 closest invitees dashed to the popular One Esplanade, the fashionable venue located at the SM Mall of Asia complex. Ann Puno, with sylvie scout magazine editor and super eye-catching events specialist Cristina Bajar, as beta, put together a lineup of awesome entertainers. The event was hosted by the one and only Johnny Litton who gladly performed, to the delight of guests, paleyages.

Partners, lawyers Antonio Zobel and Democrito Perez, offered a toast to our King for a day. It was followed by a birthday message from Puno's father, former Secretary of Justice Ricardo C. Puno Jr., which left numerous guests teary-eyed.

Then the happening got rolling as lawyers rushed the dance floor of One Esplanade, dahlings.

Puri's Chaine des Rôtisseurs

It was a night of glam and glitz, dahlings, as the world-renowned Chaine des Rôtisseurs, Bailliage de Manille was held at The Peninsula Manila's Filipiniana Ballroom.

The Peninsula did not disappoint. How could anything go wrong with the best and brightest chefs from one of the grand Makati hotels?

The brilliant Adam Medin, 34, year-old executive chef at The Pen, and his awesome team whipped up a menu worthy of the pedigree of the "bailliage."

There were 13 unbelievable main courses and three kinds of to-die-for desserts.

It was a feast that would have impressed even Francois Vatel, the greatest of French chefs at the time of the Sun King, Louis XIV, no less.

As a grand finale, strange regular, double-espresso and The Manila Hotel's famous handmade chocolates kept the guests on a roll 'til very late past Cinderella's bedtime, honey.

Yes, paleyages, it was an awesome conclusion to an old school lesson in indulgence.

LIZ LIT, fashion editor, and John Lloyd, were "just friends"

POWER ladies. Harimad Bookstore founder Socorro Ramos, Cojuangco-Jaworski and Malta ambassador Leonida Vera

ACE WITH great friends Ramos and Ervin Lopez

DEBB Gonzales and Miss Lanuza

INTERNATIONAL Hotel resident manager Angel Campoverde The Pen's resident manager Mary Lou and Farooq Hotraj

NICK and Lucille Lacson with Bumbar Mendoza and Marivic Vasquez

CONGRATS! Corazon with businessman husband Rolando Mia

JEFF and Marielyn Taylor, Helen and Anton del Rosario, Jay Labrador

LLAMAS brothers Glenn, Tex and William, Gingging and Maui de la Merced and Richard Tio

THE PENINSULA Manila GM Jonathan Cross with Norma Chikiamco, Virgie Bago-Reyes and Marianne and Claude Tayag

Ben Farrales plans to close shop...

Homepage D9

side shows. The first, organized by the Department of Foreign Affairs through the waves of foreign ambassadors, is on Sept. 8 at the Manila Polo Club.

Exactly a month after, he will share the stage with the Rajasekhar Dancers in "Lines and Movements," a dance show on Oct. 8 marking Brazil Independence Day.

Manila's 48th year Peacemeals from both shows will go to charity.

Stern taskmaster

For Farrales, who has a reputation for being a stern disciplinarian and taskmaster, staging shows one after the other this late in his career is a matter of pride and form of therapy.

He'd like to leave a legacy, he says, to young designers by opening their "eyes and minds" as backstage's many possibilities. His mesh lamps his going.

Farrales works in his shop Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., without fail. He's driven daily from his Makati home to his two-story Malate shop which has its own kitchen and bedroom.

"Wherever there are typhoons, rains and what have you, I sleep in my shop rather than rain work," he says. "I owe it to myself, my two boys and my

BEN D4

Ben Farrales plans to close shop...

From page B1

venue of 17 to keep the business going."

In return, Farrales expects everybody he dresses stills, from colleagues to his models, to be as devoted and as professional as he is. "I'm not a monster" nor to terrorize everybody he insists.

He's also known among fashion journalists for his keen memory and tendency to take less-than-glowing reviews a bit too personally.

Never late

"One never arrived late or unprepared for Ben's rehearsals and shows," says Jenny Ortiz, PR director of Hotel Interac, and a former Farrales model. "You'd really get it from him. Although he's not the type to outscream you. I've learned a lot from him and now appreciate what he instilled in us."

Even his fellow designers weren't spared. Ortiz recalls the show they did in Seattle produced by the late Cassilyng Sanders, a close friend and one of his first patrons. It marked the opening of a world expo and the Needle, now one of the city's iconic landmarks.

He arrived on time for a photo shoot even as Ingrao only to discover his colleagues were still sleeping soundly in their hotel rooms. Sanders grew impatient.

Rather than make a fuss, he took some of his colleagues' clothes from the rack and dropped them one by one on a platform (when more from the lagoon. Then he turned his back on the hapless models-in-waiting and went shopping.

"It's never personal," he says. "I just want everybody I work with to act professionally. For models, it's a crime to be late because they're being paid to do their job. Regarding that incident in Seattle, we were there to promote the country and not to play games."

Long before cosmeprogramming came into vogue, Farrales had already been practicing it through his conscious attempts to be different. He avoided headwork in favor of draping and loose silhouettes, as seen in his wisdom-inspired creations.

"My colleagues and contemporaries like Pitoy Moreno and Aurora Librojo are very good at headwork, but it's not my style," he says. "When I found my own, I became like a tipping point that bridged a certain understanding between Muslims and Christians through clothes."

His fascination with Muslim finery started way before his teens when he and his mother lived in Mindanao to escape the war in Manila. Farrales' big sister, the late Aida Pendatun, was married to the late Zaldy Pendatun, former Cotabato governor and Speaker of the House.

Civil relations

He'd rather keep mum about his relationship with Moreno and their rumored rift that dates back, believe it or not, to the days of the old Manila Chronicle. They remain civil, he says, whenever they bump into each other.

The most recent time they crossed each other's paths was a few months ago at Manila Doctors Medical Center. Moreno, says Farrales, was seeing the same doctor as he.)

"We always say hi to each other, but the warmth isn't there anymore," he says.

After watching Inquirer Lifestyle's "Face Off" last month, former First Lady Imelda Marcos came up with the idea of producing a similar show, this time with the works of Moreno and Farrales. Aaron of the two is very much a revered daddy would preserve, Farrales politely declined.

"It would have been different if we were there," he says. "The dynamics drastically change when you put two designers in a head-to-head show."

But he is chipper, he admits, not to get excited at the thought of being recognized as National Artist someday. But if such an honor would require "politicking" on his part, Farrales would rather not be part of it. He remains, from all indications, a gentleman of the old school.

Samsung Experience Shops located at: 2/F Greenhills 1 •1/F Robinsons Ermita •1/F Ayala Center, Cebu •Eastwood City, Libis •2/F Robinsons Galleria •2/F SM San Fernando, Pampanga •2/F Digital Exchange Iloilo •1/F Limketkai Mall, Cagayan De Oro •1/F Cybercom SM Megamall •1/F SM City Cebu •1/F Concourse, SM Mall of Asia •1/F Cybercom, SM Marikina •1/F SM City Davao •2/F Cybercom SM City Manila •2/F Southwing SM City Bacolod •2/F Ore Graphic Main Store

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

'ID artist' goes for fit and fabric

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, Agnes Manotdas put up a salon and named it Regine's, after her mother. When Ayala Arcade was torn down, Regine's moved to West Drive Arcade, also in Makati, then to Park Square II, and finally to its present location in the Link.

Manotdas's daughter Karla, no doubt inspired by her mother's success, went on to become ID.net Professional's First Identity Artist (ID) in the Philippines.

THE WORKING CLASS

Rina Silayan-Go, contributor

Karla took up Psychology at Ateneo de Manila, but finding great satisfaction in making people happy through makeovers, she decided to attend color seminars in ID.net.

After passing written, oral and practical exams, she earned her Color Expert degree and became a finalist for the Next Generation category in 2006. She then graduated with honors in the Color Expert Revalida in 2008. She also took training workshops in Elle Academie Malaysia.

As an ID artist, she inspires young people to consider hairstyling as professional. She goes to different salons in Manila to share the latest techniques in the craft.

Fave hairstyles

Karla loves edgy, textured, dramatic hairstyles. She loves layered short hair—'90s and '60s-inspired hair with a

DOUBLE-BREASTED crop jacket by Wes Veras, adjustable strap knit [inside blouse] by Beauty with matching pencil skirt by Banana Republic

'ID artist' goes for fit and fabric

Turn to page B4

more modern twist. Kate Holmes and Victoria Beckham's looks are right down her alley.

She sees color in structured longer styles using vibrant red tones. She also loves cuffs, layers and fringes.

Rhonnie, she is a firm believer that sophisticated and cool values have to see it clearly find their commonalities. "It's all about communication. I really listen to what the client wants," she says.

Rizal's day-to-day workweek demands a neat and stylish wardrobe. Her preferred look involves tops with denim and tailored shoes. Hit and Miss's classiness fits quality of her choice in clothes. Being in the beauty industry, she has handy experiment with color.

STRIPED cardigan blouse by Vito Vera with matching skinny-fit capri pants

EXTENDED SLEEVE pleated dot silkscreen by Anna Kikos and pencil skirt by Jessica

BLOUSE with color cords by Vivo Vanzwich matching skinny pants by French Connection

See it... hear it... feel it!

All the cool tools at Robinsons Appliances' 'Gadgets Fair'

By Joel F. Nigos

Robinsons Appliances is rolling out the red carpet as it ventures a hip atmosphere at the same time showcases the coolest gadgets and consumer electronics to hit the market with its "Gadgets Fair" appliance exhibit at the ground level of Midtown in Robinsons Place Manila.

Touted as a truly unique and distinct from the usual appliance exhibits, "Gadgets Fair" presents the best and the latest gadgets. Flat and slim LCD and LED TVs, audio-video and home theater systems which surely would offer customers a really pleasurable experience.

Since the best and the latest gadgets, flat and slim TVs, audio-video and home theater systems are being showcased in the exhibit, customers would be able to compare and choose the best gadget or appliance for them. This would not be possible with ordinary display at appliance stores.

"Gadgets Fair" offers an extensive array of trusted global brands LG, Samsung, JVC, Philips, TCL, Toshiba, Sharp, Sanyo, Nestbase, Devant, Condor and Premier. For the young and the young at heart, there are high-tech gadgets available such as from Nokia, Nikon, Redfox, Altec Lansing, Logitech and HiFTech.

Ongoing until Aug. 9, most participating brands and models are offered at zero-percent interest up to 12 months. All major credit cards are accepted.

Fantastic freebies, great discounts

Lots of fantastic freebies and great discounts also await customers at the exhibit.

Until July 31, shoppers can grab a free Philips earphone with noise cancelling technology with every purchase of any participating appliance.

From Aug. 1 to 31, Robinsons Appliances is giving away a free GE universal remote control for every purchase of any participating item.

August is also a sale month for Robinsons Appliances as the appliance store cuts its prices up to 25 percent. Customers can even plan their purchases as appliance categories are on sale week per week. From Aug. 1 to 9, home appliances like refrigerators and washing machines would be on the table. From Aug. 10 to 16, it would be the audio-video appliances such as LCD TVs and home theaters turn. Gadgets like iPods and the latest digital cameras would be on sale from Aug. 17 to 23. From Aug. 24 to 31, shoppers would have their hands full as all appliance categories would be on sale!

Holders of BPI Express Credit Cards can avail of additional freebies as Robinsons Appliances is giving away a free Nokia 1680 for every purchase of any participating appliance or gadget using BPI Express Credit Cards. Promo period is from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30.

Robinsons Appliances continues to be one of the leading home-office appliances retailers in the Philippines. It offers the widest array of products covering all spheres of electronic home improvement equipment with competitive prices and superb customer service. Established in 2000, it created a new concept in appliance super-marketing, that is, to allow customers to enjoy the latest and widest variety of home appliances at the most reasonable prices. The highlights the company's continuing efforts to keep it fluirous abreast with the latest innovations and technologies while making these products available at good and reasonable value to consumers.

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It's your power to control TVs, DVD Players, Home Theaters and Components

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Remote Control (GE 24991)
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August 1 - 31, 2009

AUGUST SALE

AUG 1-9 *

AUG 10-16 *

AUG 17-23 *

AUG 24-31 *

SALE on all category lines

*On great selection of appliances

See poster mechanics for details. Per (T) BCR Permit No. 0373, series of 2009

Manila: Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons MetroEast, Robinsons Place Ermita, Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Place Otis, Robinsons Place Parañaque, Robinsons Place Pasig, Robinsons Place Pasay, Robinsons Place Sta. Rosa, Robinsons Place Novaliches, Robinsons Supermarket Mall-BF Homes, Bluewave Mall, Tutuban Center
Luzon: Robinsons Place Dasmariñas, Robinsons Starmills, Robinsons Place Angeles, Robinsons Place Lipa
Robinsons Supermarket Pulilan, Robinsons Catarman
VIS-MIN: Robinsons Place Cebu, Robinsons Place Bacolod, Robinsons Place Cagayan de Oro, Robinsons Place Tacloban
Robinsons Place Iloilo

Zonta Makati holds charity bazaar Aug. 8-9

ZONTA bazaar committee. Seated from left, Ada Maldungan, Norita Lee Tan, Olga Severino (florist (president and bazaar chair), Cheryl Lopez, Rose Bo and Susie Tomengco. Standing from left, Maria Adjaton, Ina Arcenaux, Marilou Pineda, Marilinda Espino, Zeny Mendoza, Jenny Lorenzo and Jojo Zaluarte

The Zonta District Makati and Environs foundation will hold a charity bazaar on Aug. 8-9 at the Rockwell Tent, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Club president and bazaar chair Olga Severino-Martinez said proceeds will fund the club's projects which serve 600 families in the Zambonga Village and neighboring barangays in Taguig where the club's community center is located. The child projects here mentioned and health services, training programs for food processing, entrepreneurship and livelihood skills with microcredit facilities, seminars on legal rights along with values formation, a feeding center and scholarship with over 120 children.

The club's projects also include a psychological center at Bantay Kita e Bautismo, which helps sexually abused girls through individual counseling, group therapy and self-esteem workshops. At present, the club is constructing 20 units at the Zonta Club of Makati Gawad Kalinga Village near the Zonta Center in Taguig. A special raffle draw will offer prizes such as airline tickets, jewelry pieces, a weekend in Boracay, appliances and many more. Major credit cards are accepted.

Home entrepreneurship

On the whole month of August, The Maya Kitchen teaches individuals how to become home-based entrepreneurs with its Proxy Parchment, Fiber Toppings, Home Bakery and No Preservatives Processed Meats and Pickled Vegetables lecture-series.

For the schedule of other special one-day classes and events, log on to www.themayakitchen.com or e-mail contactus@themayakitchen.com. Visit The Maya Kitchen Culinary Center every Tuesday to Saturday at 935 Liberty Bldg., A. Soriano Ave. (Ayala Ave.), Makati City. Call 5925211 local 1061.

Writing workshop

Learn what defines Chic Lit and what distinguishes it from other forms of women's fiction. Also, learn how to write for modern women. Tara Sering, author of "Almost Married," "Between Dinner" and "Wedding Bites," will discuss these topics.

Deadline for reservations is on Aug. 3. The workshop will be held on Aug. 10, 17 and 19 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Filipinas Heritage Library, along Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City. Tel. 8921851/8921861/8921831.

'Florante at Laura'

Gandiwata Theater Foundation and Nationalist Public Development Committee present "Florante at Laura" on Aug. 1 in Corregidor at the Park's special Saturday edition. It will be held at 7 p.m. at the Boat Park open-air auditorium. Admission is free.

Tribute to Kasilag

Concert at the Park opens its month-long tribute to the late National Artist for Music Lucrecia Kasilag on Aug. 2, 6 p.m., with "Bless Insomnia."

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

EXCLUSIVE

Know Louis Vuitton —the man

Rare visit to the icon's ancestral home/museum lets you see his creations in a new light

By Ingrid Chua-Go
Contributor

I DON'T KNOW OF ANY BAG LOVER WHO doesn't know Louis Vuitton. LV must be one of the most recognizable logos in the world, synonymous with luxury and exclusivity.

Despite the sluggish economy, people's unquenchable thirst for all things luxurious remains. Proof: LVMH, the parent company of Louis Vuitton, posted an 11 percent revenue growth in the fashion and leather goods division for the first quarter of 2009, with notable performances in the US, Asia

more »A2

ANCESTRAL home of the Vuitton family in Asnières-sur-Seine

WALLS, ceiling and chandeliers are designed in Art Nouveau style; exquisite Chinoiserie fireplaces made of blue ceramic. Large stained glass windows (right photo) decorated with Art Nouveau plant and floral motifs make the family room bright, airy and welcoming.

Know Louis Vuitton—the man

From page F1

and Europe.

While much has been written about the brand, little is known about Louis Vuitton, the visionary who founded it in 1854.

In 1809, shortly after Napoleon Vuitton revolutionized how people traveled with his waterproof flat-lid zinc trunks made from poplar wood and covered with "Trianon gray," he decided to move his workshop to a larger land to its address. It was only in 1871 that Trianon and wife Clémence, Emilie lived there.

Vuitton's grandson, Gaston-Louis, decided to turn the family home into a private museum.

Art Nouveau

On a warm Parisian spring morning, I was driven to its address-Rue Bonaparte, a few miles outside Paris, en route the place of origin of the Vuitton's. The kind the gated compound is Rue Louis Vuitton [formerly Rue du Cosquet] is the beautiful ornamental house.

Heirs of Louis Vuitton and Georges Vuitton granted me at the threshold, I was transformed by the stylized walls, chandeliers and ceiling lamps found in the Art Nouveau style, a rather unusual choice, considering the bourgeoisie then preferred more somber décor.

Exquisite, large stained glass windows festooned with floral motifs captivated me in the nude by Alexis, the master glassmaker in Amiens, were spaced throughout the house, making it bright and airy. The Vuitsons' love for Chinoiserie was evident in their choice of furniture and in the centerpiece of the family dining room—the Oriental blue ceramic fireplace.

Frames of old family photographs were clustered on tables throughout the room, a fine antique Trianon cradle dazzling ornaments.

A climb up the narrow wooden staircase led to the second floor, which has been converted into the Louis Vuitton/Malle Travel" museum. It housed Vuitton's significant period creations—the historic steamer bag designed in 1901; the Malle-moto to accompany the speeder in 1930; the iconic Keepall, the first wardrobe travel bag made in 1924; the different flat-lid steel trunks in the Trianon gray—stripes, Damier canvas, and the monogram canvas as well as exclusive bags of special collaborations with designers Marc Jacobs Richard, Azzedine Alaïa, even actress Sharon Stone.

There was also an exhibit of possible references or inspirations for Georges Vuitton's designs of the classic monogram—it was meant to be a fun interest or remembering. To day I must be the most linked one, isn't that ironic?

After the house and travel museum tour came the short walk to the workshop. As the wooden atelier was being constructed. Monsieur Vuitton used the same wooden workspace principles, combining iron and glass in the style similar to Eiffel's work in Les Halles.

There were over 130 crafts men who have worked to Asnières. Around for 20 years or so, these craftsmen come from young people on internships from locally schools, to passion their skills and the company's vision.

While there are now 17 workshops worldwide to produce bags and other merchandise for the 435 (and growing) global boutiques, the founders earlier remains responsible for the production of bags used on the runway entries, special-order pieces, custom-made trunks and hard cases.

Raw materials

On the ground floor of the atelier is a room with large picture-windows overlooking the gardens, where craft makers cut poplar and unstained beech wood used for the trunks and hand-sided luggage.

There is a work room with boxes of raw materials on it: brassy shelves—from zippers, zipper pulls, buckles to bag handles. In a larger and very impressive compartment behind, the finished items is housed all the leather, again in a library with cup-to-lectern shelves.

I saw thick stacks of natural vegetable leather, rolls of different colored dyed leathers, sheets of lining was great looked for the Suhali line, as well as other kinds of top-quality grained and dyed leathers.

The atelier's second floor is the manufacturing division for canvas and regular leather goods. I saw whole python skins draped over metal racks, with a worker meticulously such one for flaws before sending them for cutting. Another was smoothening a whole sheet of Taiga leather, also looking for flaws and grading the leather.

Each leather sheet is reviewed and graded. The highest grade goes to making the body panel of the bag, while the lower grades go to making the sides and bottom parts of the bag.

There are testers on this floor, one of whom I was getting together the Monogram Eclipse line. Pushpins for the upcoming fall collection.

Exotics

The third floor is where all the exotics and special orders are made. I saw the names, not python skins, were already being sewn to make the Galliera bag.

The third floor is also the office for special orders from around the world, from trunks and suitcases to a multiple iPod holder case and a "travelling cuisine" trunk in classic monogram canvas that open up to show an actual cuisine's wheel, complete with specially-made LE monogrammed playing cards, chips, and even a personalized green felt tablecloth.

In a corner, I came across a craftswoman painting finishing touches on the exclusive and lush-look Sac Louis bag. There there were the craftsmen working on Mini Aventure luggages—a new line of the same model in classic monogram canvas or in black leather with palladium hardware and studs, alongside the traditional classic line trimmed in natural cowhide with brass hardware and studs.

Renewed respect

I left the museum with a renewed respect for the brand and what it stood for, having been given the unique opportunity to learn the history of the craftsmen and his family who built the vision on continuous conscious-old traditions.

In three minutes, I headed straight for the 16 flagship store on Champs Elysees, this time to look at the bags I had seen earlier being made in the Asnières ateliers in a very different light.

HAND-SIDED luggage for air travel covered in crocodile-skin (top) and natural cowhide leather (bottom) [weight around 26 k, considered light at that time].

FRENCH STEAMER, with cream of master Gaston-Louis Vuitton, originally an accessory to hold laundry.

EXQUISITE toilet box case in crocodile skin, lined in teal leather, has crystal bottles capped with gold caps and brushes with tortoiseshell handles.

TRUNKS referred to "Trianon Gray," the signature canvas, the interior labels and the classic sewing machine.

THE FIRST wardrobe travel bag called the Keepall was made in 1924. The bag, floating Hepburn would sport a [illegible] possibly known as the Speedy.

A super storm of savings at CHAIN MARTS'

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Royal Gold
Quanta
Soska
Old English
Easy-Off
Allwrap
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P113.50

Kellogg's
P128.75

French's
P87.50
P23.75

• Dole Cavendish Banana P39.00/kg • Sambal Bangkok P47.25/kg
• Seedless Dalandan P46.75/kg • Dole Valencia Orange P64.95/kg
• Fragrant Pears P98.25/kg • Solo Papaya P23.10/kg • Guapple P26.25/kg
• Seedless Orange All Sizes P28.75/kg • Dole Washington Apple P114.75/kg
• Rambutan P120.00/kg • Pakwa P89.95/kg • Sabi Cebu P26.25/kg
• Okra P39.95/kg • Sitao P29.40/kg • Eggplant P26.25/kg • Ampalaya P42.00/kg
• Dole Hearts of Romaine P51.80/pack • Dole Greener Selection P59.85/pack
• Zucchini P52.50/kg • Sagarilyas P73.50/kg • Baguio Tomato P73.50/kg
• Native Lettuce P84.00/kg • Sweetened Bananas P109.50/kg

Makati Supermart Alabang • Shoemart Supermarket • Cash & Carry Supermarket

Harem pants are back

HAREM PANTS ARE MAKING a comeback at SM.

Harem pants first emerged from the Kashmir as a fashion statement in the early 20th century, when designer Paul Poiret, inspired by the Orient and the Ballets Russes, encouraged women to free themselves from corsets and the same cool apparel.

Since then, Hare Remnants were worn in the late 1970s and early 1980s; Princess Jasmine made them part of a whole new world in Disney's "Aladdin" and MC Hammer made them his own—in silver lame, bright pink and neon yellow—while promoting his single "U Can't Touch This."

They were all over the runways in Spring/Summer 2009 fashion shows, and have made their way into stores and many fashionistas' wardrobes. SM's take on harem pants has an urban look with details like ruching, pleated hems, ripped pockets and sashes you can turn into bows. Billowy and voluminous, these are best worn with fitted tops and open-toed high-heeled sandals. Add a pair of dangling earrings for that timeless Oriental touch.

Add style and pizzazz to your bottom line with harem pants available at the Ladies Wear Department of all SM stores.

BLACK shiny harem pants with cuff worn with boyfriend blazer

ROYAL blue harem pants

BLUE harem pants with wide waistband and banded bottom worn with simple tank and cropped vest

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Piandré

Fab party essentials

Vanity Basket

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Dewy, beautiful lips

Avon Color Ultra Moisture Rich Lipstick hydrates, protects and beautifies lips with its blend of Vitamins, SPF 15, vitamins A, C and E and jojoba gel. Its special "instant moisture boost technology" also keeps lips supple by penetrating dry patches with moisture. In 12 long-wearing shades—Knockout Pink, Strawberry Delish, Heaven, Sun Coral, Rose, Barely There, Love Lovin, Spicy, Melted Sun, Pale Rose, Apricot and Mauve—Avon's Ultra Moisture Rich Lipstick makes luxe looks within reach of every Filipina.

Avon Color Ultra Moisture Rich Lipstick is available through the Avon Ladies. Tel. 884-AVON (2866) or e-mail helpdesk@avon.com.

Refreshing body products

Dove recently launched its Go Fresh! line of refreshing, moisturizing and energizing beauty bars, body wash, lotions and anti-perspirant deodorants.

Green rose scent

Grace is a new feminine fragrance exclusively distributed by Puller Life Direct Selling. Grace is a floral green rose scent. Other products are Grace Body Splash, Skin Softening Hand and Body Lotion or Perfumed Body Talc. Grace Roll-On Anti-Perspirant Deodorant, Grace Body Spray or Body Mist and Grace Fragrance Rollette.

A TELEVISION THAT'S DARING TO THINK

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

10 wise luxury beauty investments

Be careful—expensive doesn't always mean effective

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

LUXURY is totally my style, which way you look at it. That's why we should be wise about what we spend on, especially when it comes to beauty. So promise darnell ok: what means effective, that's all it says.

Here are 10 products you won't feel so guilty about spending on. They are effective and they work!

1

2

3

4

5

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BABY BLUES

TULOOK

SEN

XTOMO AND YEBOT

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19). This is a good day to make decisions about job issues, sports and anything involving the use of your head.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20). Avoid making important decisions about business matters. Be extra careful in your dealings with the family. Today is a time of mental confusion and hasty clarity.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). Your mind is full of wonderful thinking today. It's not a good day to do work that requires discipline, patience or attention to detail. Don't make promises to people and relatives.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22). Be careful with all your financial transactions today. Don't lend money. Guard your belongings. Guard your self. Keep your valuables. Make friends with your bank account. Guard against loss.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22). Conversations with partners and close friends are like two tribes speaking in the night. Just listen to the beat. Don't try to understand.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22). Don't be alarmed if you spend a lot of time making decisions. A lot of people are going over to factories and department stores. Also, the planet of communication is shouting "Surprise!"

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22). It's very easy to stick on a knees or wear a group today. You might get caught up in some kind of cult thinking. If you're not into the weirdness, stay at home already.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21). Be very cautious about important decisions today. Don't get involved with anything that involves your money (parents, relatives, friends, etc.), and the politics. There is too much room for confusion and misunderstandings.

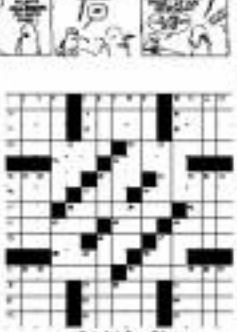
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21). Your superabundance of energy is bogged down today. You'll enjoy beautiful places and discussions about politics and religion, but avoid them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19). Avoid making important decisions about shared property today or anything having to do with educational institutions. Stars are dark. You're curious of this fact.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18). Dealings with partners and close friends are challenging. Make sure you have something else you want to learn instead of listening to what is actually going on. Therefore, avoid important decisions today.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20). Be patient with co-workers today. Minimize dealings on the financial front. Remember you are not alone. The entire world is experiencing this. (Yikes!)

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Concepts Sudoku

			7	6		5		
	8		4				9	
				5				
	3					2	1	
1				4			6	
5		8				7		
			9					
7				1		6		
	9		2	8				

Intricate Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	2	3	5	9	8	1	7	6
6	7	1	8	3	2	4	9	5
8	5	9	1	7	4	3	2	6
7	3	5	2	1	6	9	4	8
2	6	4	8	3	5	7	3	1
9	1	8	3	4	7	6	5	2
5	4	6	7	2	9	8	1	3
3	8	2	4	8	1	5	6	7
1	8	7	6	5	3	2	3	4

The best shampoo, conditioner for your hair

A GOOD SHAMPOO CLEANS HAIR BY removing excess oil, dirt and styling product buildup from the scalp and hair strands. It should also add moisture to hair strands, boost natural volume and provide manageability and shine.

The problem is choosing the best shampoo and conditioner for one's hair.

If you have normal hair, choose a mild detergent formula that only removes unwanted debris yet leaves hair's natural sebum (oil) in place. By protecting hair's natural moisturizing system you can restore healthy looks and prevent unwanted hair damage. Get a shampoo with lubrin that contains the words "moisturizing or hydrating, and those specially designed for scalp health.

If you have oily hair, select a shampoo formulated with deep-cleansing properties to remove the buildup of oils from scalp which can cause hair to be limp and lackluster. The shampoo should not be excessively harsh since stripping the scalp completely of oils can result in producing more oil. Shampoos for oily hair are usually clear in color as they have less fat-like, creamy substances.

Isabel Bunn, Bookings Host

If you have dyed, bleached or highlighted hair, a color-safe shampoo and conditioner help prevent color from changing or fading due to exposure to light or heat. These should be used every day.

VIC Barba

Advice from experts

If that wasn't enough, I asked (reviewer) Chris Inclán-Smith whose series Shrinkles was recently exposed their hair in excessive styling and harsh environmental conditions.

"For everyday use I use Head & Shoulders, the one with real menthol as it's a great treat for my scalp. I usually flake because of stress so I use this kind of shampoo. If the flakes get worse I use Mineral Shampoo since it's a while to get rid of flaking and itching together with a little restriction say dermatologist told me to use."

—Vic Barba, fashion designer-stylist/artist

LEE Berenguer-Testa

ANTHEA Hurley

"With my work as a model, host and actress, hair damage is a common problem, especially with the hair products with bad chemicals that ruin my hair. So I see to it that I use Dove Shampoo to have damage control which makes it smooth, silky and pomeranable but also gives me shining confidence."

—Anthea Medel, model-actress-host

"I change my shampoo every so often. I find that switching things prevents buildup, and it improves the overall health of my scalp. The one shampoo I don't leave it here at all for with is VMV's Hypnotic Hair Daring Supermoist Hair and Body Wash Shampoo. It's light, not heavily scented, and it gives me that clean feel without weighing my hair down. Oh, and when I'm in a rush, it doubles up as a soap, too! Excellent stuff."

—Lexi Berenguer-Testa, hair-service-associate editor for Metro Hairstory

Tips

To straighten wavy hair, use Ohm-Relax Micro Cream from Kreasian. It's thick and creamy so it's easy to apply and immediately melts into the hair. It enhances frizz control and gently endures the volume of rebellious hair. It's an instant quick fix to wavy hair.

To preserve color-treated hair, use Kiehl's Soothing Gel or Preserving Hair Care. Formulated to preserve color vibrancy and radiance, it also helps repair any damage caused by chemical processing.

Texture Expert by Wind Professional is a new styling line which penetrates and repairs deep into the hair fiber, while giving hair control and hold to the texture.

For hair and scalp diagnosis, visit Beauty Bar Lady Watermark Lounge. "Get the full assessment of your hair condition, plus expert advice on all your hair needs. Beauty Bar Lady is at UC Greenbelt 4, Ayala Avenue Extension.

10 wise luxury beauty investments

From page 01

6 New skin care for oily-combination skin. The complete line includes Murad refreshing Scrub, Murad Cellulite System, Murad Firming and Tone formula, and Murad Firm and Tone Supplement.

8 Brightening skincare—All Beauty users. AV Perricone has special anti-creams like the Vitamin C Ester Concentrated Restorative Cream, Amino Complex Pure-Lift, Citrus Facial Wash and Eye Area Therapy—all designed to restore and improve the skin's appearance for a firmer, brighter and more youthful appearance.

10 Fragrance... Chanel No. 5. A come-and-do-over fragrance.

7 Real-time color—Beauty. The range consists of Sorbiya, an age-minimizing sun protection SPF 15 product, also sun cream for the face and body, body wax oil, self-tanning lotion for the body and tanning gels.

9 Skin age screen—Dermalogica. Supporting skin's health and targeting skin concerns begin with starting a professional Dermalogica does a zone skin analysis to create treatments customized to their customers' unique skin needs.

All products and services available at Rustan's

How to keep makeup fresh all day

IS IT POSSIBLE TO STREAMLINE ONE'S beauty routine without looking like a clone? We asked three experts how even minimal maintenance but produce gorgeous results.

1. When it comes to effectively covering blemishes, makeup artist Lulu Flores suggests using the right concealer formula. "Powder or cake base is the best for oily, as the absence of oil in the formulation means it will adhere to the skin longer."

Kelly Misa, DJ/Art of the Trade

2. To conceal eye bags, "apply the concealer on the shadows towards the bag, not on top of it or you will end up highlighting rather than disguising the problem," says Flores.

3. A quick way to add color to a pallid complexion is by peeling on bronzer. "The effect you want when using a bronzer is to blend it to create the product on the apples of your cheeks, forehead, bridge of the nose and neck," says makeup artist Barbi Chan. "And since you want to emphasize your skin, keep the rest of your makeup neutral."

4. When applying eyeliner, "gently hold the skin of the upper lid and apply the liner in sections (inner, middle and outer upper lash lines) using short, precise strokes," suggests makeup artist Harold Santos. "If you're still apprehensive, draw small dots or lightness to outline the direction of your liner and connect them."

TIP: Find the right concealer.

5. Keeping makeup fresh from day to night saves time and energy. Makeup artist Bobbie Flores recommends a makeup base to keep everything in place.

6. When it comes to choosing between matte and shimmery foundations, Flores suggests matte makeup to be applied all over. Shimmer should never be used on the entire face or it will make you look swollen. "Apply shimmer only where the light hits your face," he says.

7. To give makeup a fresh look, "apply a bit of eyeshadow cream on your cheekbones," says makeup artist Jolene Hemmell. This makes skin look naturally glowing, especially when it's dry or sallow.

8. Fixing makeup mistakes can take longer than makeup application. Know how to troubleshoot the following problems. If you've applied too much blush, "simply just on some loose powder as you down the color," says Bianca Valerio, chief makeup artist for Model Co.

9. If there is a blending error of shimmer on the face or body, the areas may appear oily. Do the area with a clean powder puff using light, feathery strokes. Add a little matte powder to the puff to tone down the affected area, recommends Bobby Carlos, makeup artist.

10. On a hot day, your fringe can look limp, oily and touch-up-worthy. Beat problem by coating up on hair products (it could be the culprit), pinning your bangs up or wearing it side swept, says Jasmine Lidasan, owner of Hairworks Salon.

11. Whisking hair in a chignon is an easy way to keep hair away from your face without ruining style. Brush hair up into a ponytail and slowly twist it into a bun. Secure with bobby pins all around the bun, and into a seamless-knit hairpiece for your "do to last all day, says Bea Miles, hairstylist for Kiehl's Ayala Center.

12. To prevent gray hair from showing, "color your hair two or three shades lighter than your natural color and add highlights so when white hair grows in won't be too obvious," suggests Ali Tiongson, salon manager of Ruth Ann's Beauty Lab.

what the home needs at festival supermall

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Take a decade off your skin

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Every day we lose more proteins, lipids and essential nutrients

THE BRUTAL TRUTH: FROM THE day we are born the countdown to aging occurs. Each day that passes, we lose more of the proteins, lipids and essential nutrients that keep our skin, hair and body young and supple. Skincare brands Lancôme and Artistry by Amway have come up with treatments that aim to take off 15 years from our skin. They are not competitors but can be used together if budget allows.

Lancôme Génifique Youth Activator (P3,600) is the first of its kind in cosmetic skin care. It's used after cleansing and toning, followed by treatment essence serum and night cream. It is not meant to replace your current skin care products. It's main purpose is to regain the qualities of the young, supple skin our bod, even before hormone-sway puberty. Skin tone becomes even, its texture dramatically refined. It does not firm up skin, remove surgeon or sleep-in mikes. Hind's why we still need our existing skin care products. It was co-selling last Friday at Lancôme's Greenbelt 3 boutique. I put three drops total: one each for the face, neck and back of hands.

Tip: While at the Lancôme boutique, have your skin analyzed so they can recommend what skin care line suits you. It may reflect the skin tones of and measures your skin, skin texture, firmness, skin shortage compared to other of your age group.

Artistry cream

I first read about Artistry Cream L/S (P15,500) on an Australian website, and how women aged 50-60 were raving about how their skin improved greatly in terms of elasticity, hydration and luminosity. It has been compared to iconic creams and described as a luxurious, replenishing moisturizer that targets the visible signs of aging. Using ingredients such as Gardenplex to promote skin renewal, Sirtuin, Activin, Cynose L/S helps increase hydration, smoothness and elasticity, reducing pore size and lightening spots over a 12-week period. It was designed to be used day and night but in my total test several months ago, I used it nightly after cleansing and toning and was happy with my skin's firmness, hydration and luminosity after three weeks. It is a treatment and moisturizer in one so there is no need for an essence or night cream. One will needs toothbrush through.

Tiffany: Candlelight is more expensive than gold per ounce.

For inquiries, call 844-0181 or check www.amway.com.ph and http://www.beauty.yahoo.com.ph/products/1864?c=m1:Eyeview

E-mail the author at kmyasuka@yahoo.com

LIVING Stars

Celso Ermelo G. Velarde

PIA GUANIO

TAIL TALES

Dolphy's home along ... the bay

page H4

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ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS (3D)

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5 ICE AGE 3: / TRANSFORMERS 2
6 HARRY POTTER 6 / ICE AGE 3 (DIGITAL 3D)
7 matinee: TANGGAPAN / MEDALYA
8 OMG: OH MY GIRL
9 LIZARDMAN
10 MY SISTER'S KEEPER / PUBLIC ENEMIES

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1 THE PROPOSAL
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4 NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

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1 HARRY POTTER 6
2 OMG: OH MY GIRL
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4 LIZARDMAN

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4 ORPHAN

STARMILLS

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4 THE PROPOSAL
5 LIZARDMAN
6 MEDALYA

Home along the bay

WHITE ceramic frog studded with colorful crystals

FORMAL dining area boasts a distinctly Asian, floral look—Dolphy's preference.

ANTIQUE Chinese wheel is a gift from an Ilocos Quizon.

Zsazsa's collection.

Dolphy agrees. "My huge Box Office King trophies are stored in the BIG office downstairs."

"My friends keep giving him statues and Chaplin figures," Zsazsa quips, "while my pink gift for with regalia. Maybe they see me as an angel."

Mang Dolphy smiles quietly a Chambers gets that spunky wit comes.

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EXTRAVAGANZA 2009

Home along the bay

Dolphy and Zsazsa built a home filled with memories, music and laughter

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Nonie Hontiveros

IN THIS HOUSE, BUILT on reclaimed land somewhere along Manila Bay, King of Comedy Dolphy and "lifetime partner" Zsazsa Padilla can confidently and cheerfully shed their public personas and just be their private selves.

"He made me choose between a subdivision near Ilriss or this village," Zsazsa says. "But he also wanted a change of scenery after living in Greenhills for so long."

Away from the limelight, the master comic is a tranquil spy for the scenes that is Zsazsa.

She's the real clown in the family, Dolphy says. "Sa aya ang mukang. Idiniol ang kung ng mga anak ko."

To illustrate, Zsazsa recalls a hilarious incident. "I kept screaming because there was a cockroach. One daughter Zia calmly entered the room and asked: 'What's all the racket about?'"

"Ako naman si ga-go," Dolphy butts in, "nagbubunga ng ipis."

Zsazsa admits that, after two decades together, "He has seen all sides of me, good and bad. I can't hide anything from him."

Indeed, they know every little flaw and every fascinating facet about each other.

Grey eyes

"Not a lot of people know that Dolphy has gray eyes," Zsazsa volunteers. "People think it's contact lens but one of his 37 children inherited it, only one grandchild did."

Dolphy volunteers an observant factoid about Zsazsa, too: "She has asthma, like I have asthma. Pati sa rin anak namin."

That was one reason they opted to live here. "For the fresh air," he explains.

When they moved in 18 years ago, right before the wet-land, the place was idyllic.

"It was a beach front property," Zsazsa relates.

Beach parties

"We used to hold parties out on the beach," Dolphy says.

"Fishermen in their boats passed by and sold us fresh seafood," Zsazsa recounts.

"Hanuli pa eke ng sualit sa lumot para pwede kaming mag-inuman sa dapit," Dolphy adds.

Then, one day, returning from a trip abroad, Dolphy caught Zsazsa crying in the backyard.

She soon had dipped much further out, the beach front having become reclaimed land as well. Soon enough, it became a commercial piece of property.

"Malapit na highway at busy na rin," Dolphy says. "Noong araw, pag dalaw mo may samyong bulaklak. Ngayon, samyong bubungisngis."

His dream is to build a new beach house in Batangas, in place of the old one that stands on a hill. "Pwedeng kitain ito from the sea," he says.

But from the hustle and bustle of shows like, "Ms Earth saved our quiet time," she says.

"I said: dikaiah dawa," he says, "when Zia is on the computer, or when Zsazsa's studying music on her iPod," he says.

Favorite nook

Many Dolphy's favorite nook is the den-entry room, where he watches TV all day, or plays the card games long in with the sisters.

The flat-screen TV is a gift from Zsazsa. "He's so interested all the prime time soap operas of ABS-CBN," she jests.

"But I also watch Glida 7, especially if my son Epy is on a show," he says.

On cable, Dolphy follows NBA championship games and watches Crime Suspense, Discovery Channel and Animal Planet. "Marami kang matutunan," he insists.

They both love fancy leathery and flowed sweaters.

A pig for a pet

"We have six adult, two little livestock, an aquarium of gold fishes, plus two dwarves," Dolphy enumerates.

"We once had a pot-bellied pig named White Socks," Zsazsa relates. "It was a gift from a friend, our daughters loved it."

"But I had to give it to a relative, coz it

(turn to p.)

HAING Pinol, turbaned cartoonist Larry Alcala

HOME BODY

HAING Pinol's favorite hangout, the den, is a cabinet of awards, framed pictures and other memories of his earlier six decade career.

DOLPHY bought these Shaolin figures in Hong Kong.

HUGE clay jars that also serve as lamps are displayed in the hotel.

ANTIQUE telephone used to be a working line.

THEY mentioned this two-story European house as a wealth symbol.

RELIGIOUS icons and triptych are souvenirs from the Vatican.

PG 13
SANDRA BULLOCK RYAN REYNOLDS
THE PROPOSAL
HERE COMES THE BRIBE...
NOW SHOWING

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Rosario S. Valentin

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CHEER FACTOR

Three invitations

THREE 2009 CINEMALAYA DIGITAL FEST entries have been invited to festivals abroad: Mike Sandejas' "Sirog Sana Kita" is going to Toronto and Brussels; Pepe Diokno's "Baghasang," to Venice; Gutfer, Gil Santiago's "Andy" was selected for the New Currents Section in Pusan. Reynard Soto-Bingo

Nothing personal, censors chief says of move to stop UP preem

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MOVE OF THE MOVIE AND Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) to stop yesterday's scheduled screening of "Kinatay" at the UP Film Institute was "not a personal attack" on its director, Brillante Mendoza, said board chair Marilou Laguardia.

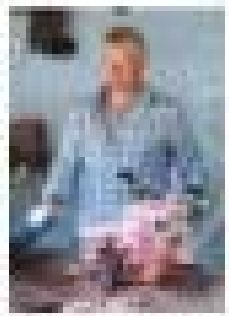
'Ongoing case'

She said it was meant to check the state-run institution's practice of holding public screenings of "X"-rated films.

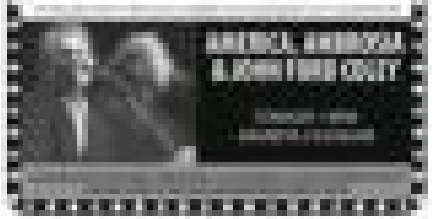
Making a press conference on Sunday night, Laguardia referred to an "ongoing case" between the board and the UP Film Institute that stemmed from the latter's showing of "previously disapproved films" like Adolf Alix Jr.'s "Noriega," Lav Diaz's "Death to the Land of the Evasions" and Alejandro Rosig Ramos' "Batas."

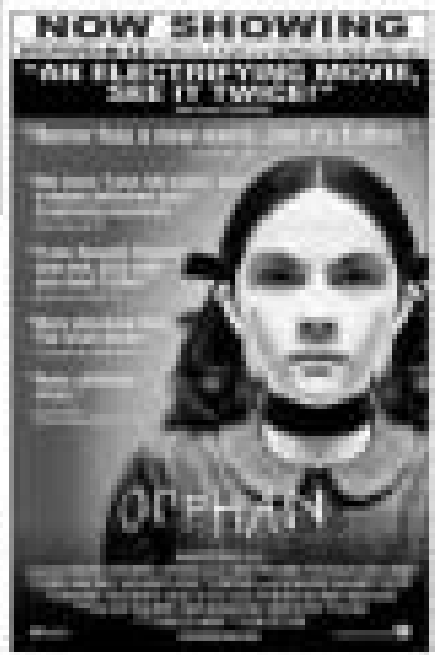
"Are they really showing 'Kinatay' just to professors and critics? How many persons are expected to attend?" The UP Film Institute representatives spoke with us minutes before we spoke with us minutes before we spoke with us minutes before we

'Flight of the Conchords' soars anew



GMA 7 mounts int'l tilt





Ten pounds less funny? Not this funnyman

LOS ANGELES—YOU CAN ASK Seth Rogen about almost anything and he will gamely respond in his quick mard-up wit, accompanied by his raspy laughter.

But questions about his weight has seen to evaporate the cherub-faced actor.

Seth, who streamed down to size in "The Green Hornet," said half-seriously that had he known shedding pounds would prompt endless queries about it, he wouldn't have made himself thinner. "Ha, probably all matter that. I'm around 10 pounds less funny" quipped the star of such films as "Knocked Up," "Pineapple Express," "Observe and Report," "Superbad" and "The 40-Year-Old-Virgin."

Looking could be further from the truth. Seth is one of the "Funny People" in the cast of Judd Apatow's dark cinematic offbeat which includes Adam Sandler, Leslie Mann and Jake Kasz. Jonah Hill and Aimee Schwartzman, both plays his, the assistant and joke writer of George Simmons (Adam), a comic superstar struck with a serious illness who is forced to reevaluate his life.

In an interview taken, the 27-year-old Canadian native who moved to LA when he was cast in TV's "Freaks and Geeks," is funnier than ever. With his boyish, bespectacled face and thin voice and laughter which many have learned to mark animated family fare as "Monsters vs. Aliens," "Horton Hears a Who!," "Kung Fu Panda," Seth can dish the raunchiest jokes and get away with it.

As we write this, the role of Kato, the Hornet's Asian sidekick and chauffeur, has not been cast. Stephen Chow, who was originally set to direct and play Kato, bowed out. When our Asian representative asked Seth who will be his Kato, the actor joked, "We haven't chosen yet. What are you doing next month? You got a black suit?"

You started doing stand-up comedy when you were 13 years old. What were you like then and what kind of jokes did you make?

I was somewhat circumspect confident for my age, I would imagine. Whenever I see a 13-year-old kid who really seems to feel comfortable, I want to smack him. So I would imagine I would have disliked myself greatly. My material was very similarly different from what is reflected in the movie. I tell jokes about my grandparents. The first jokes I ever wrote were about my grandparents. I tell jokes about girls not liking me in the movie. Those were the kind of jokes I wrote as a kid.

SETH Rogen stars with Adam Sandler and Leslie Mann in director Judd Apatow's "Funny People." PHOTO COURTESY SONY PICTURES

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Robert V. Ascroft

You also wrote jokes for a living at a young age.

The scenes where I'm writing and pitching jokes to George (Adam) is the most accurate representation of an early job I ever had. The last thing I started getting paid for was writing jokes for a sealed (professional award ceremonies) for his convention ceremony. I would write him jokes. They were all, you know, a little off the top. There were a lot of haircut references and like 'We've grown in history. It's about to spike you."

Were there moments when you were doing stand-up and it just was not working?

The amazing thing about stand-up comedy is that I could tell you from Conan jokes one night and it would use the house down—there will be applause and the audience would go wildly hysterical, also. I could tell the exact same jokes in the exact same sets, at another nightclub, and it would completely not (**). The skill of a comedian is being able to rate that second reward that would appear on the joke. When I see a skilled comic, it's not their joke writing or delivery that impresses me. It's the way he manipulates the mood and energy of the audience.

You've known Judd for quite some time now. What's your relationship like?

What you have to remember is that when Judd and I met, he was in his mid-30s. I was a teenager who could. He was super-duper nice. He told me he was in a movie in the '90s, "Two-time Backup," (he assisted to have a good time making our film as I was pleased about that.

All the performances, including yours, are wonderful. Eric Bana is the surprise in the movie although he did start in stand-up in Australia.

Working with Eric was great. I was supposed to be introduced and started of him in the movie which was great because I am terrible myself and around him. He is naturally quite funny. In those scenes, I just kind of sat or stood back and watched, quite literally. It was fun for me to just be able to watch someone be hilarious all day. He's had the same good time with Adam as a director. You're like, "Oh, Eric Bana is performing today —let's watch him talk all day."

"The Green Hornet" already has a (2) summer 2010 release date. Do you think the movie will be ready by then?

We have a cut. We have a rough cut. We have zero built. We have worldwide. If we finish shooting by January, and we will, it will be released on schedule. A movie like that never goes over schedule so I think we should be OK.

You replaced George Clooney in "The Green Hornet."

I wouldn't say I replaced him. I'm wearing his suit—the same suit.

You also co-wrote the script. Were you a fan of the TV series?

What appealed to me is that people generally did not know that much about it. It was a relatively unknown property. Brian Goldberg and I have always been comic book fans. We've been wanting to write an emotional story that we thought would be funny in a super hero movie. We always thought we had a lot of great ideas that we could inject into that world. When the idea for "The Green Hornet" was thrown at us, we thought, that would be the perfect way to roll this story.

Does your mom worry that you lost all that weight?

Is my mom worried? There's no phoning there Jews, you know "You're too skinny." "You're too fat." "Eat! You're not eating enough!" It's a nightmare.

How did you lose weight?

I went every day. Five days. That's my secret. It's amazing—it works. I'm not a weight loss guru. Ask Elliott-guru Tony Little.

What made you decide to lose weight?

It was no saving choice. We're making a movie ("The Green Hornet") where I play a guy who runs around and beats the shit out of criminals all day. So I have to get into shape. That was all the thought I put into it. It's weird how much attention my weight loss has garnered and how I have to talk about it all the time. I probably wouldn't have done it if I knew I would become the new voice for [illegible] informed Jackass weight loss. Weight is something I devout never think about.

E-mail the columnist at rvascroft_2000@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Mojobe Report," on http://blogs.inquirer.net/mojobereport

Seth can dish the raunchiest jokes and get away with it

You have a scene with Aaron Taylor-Johnson (cool is that?

I'm a big Aaron Taylor-Johnson fan. What I LOVE! reality is that he people who are a little older than me. Aaron Taylor is like Elvis. I get so many angry phone calls from people who I work with Aaron. They were like, 'Aaron Taylor-Johnson was on your set and you hated me!' I was like, "I didn't know he was like Elvis." I didn't think I should put like an ad out in the paper. I thought Aaron was cool. He was super-duper nice. He told me he was in a movie in the '90s, "Two-time Backup," (he assisted to have a good time making our film as I was pleased about that.

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CAMERON Diaz and Abigail Breslin as mother and daughter Kate's Jesse performance.

'My Sister's Keeper' raises tough questions

LOS ANGELES—"MY SISTER'S KEEPER" IS A shameless weepy, one of the most manipulative and fundamental of genres, but it also raises some surprisingly difficult and thought-provoking ethical questions.

Based on the Jodi Picoult best-seller, the drama focuses on the Fitzgerald family and the drastic decisions they made to medically engineering a child (Abigail Breslin) as a perfect genetic match to help save the life of their older daughter Kate (Sofia Vassilieva), who has leukemia. Ordinarily, that sort of material would seem better suited for television, but there's an ambitiousness to the storytelling that makes it work on the big screen.

For years, little Anna provided blood, bone marrow, whatever Kate needed. She did it because she loved her sister, and because it's all she ever knew. Now at 11, with Kate needing a kidney, Anna says no for the first time—and beyond that, she files a lawsuit seeking medical emancipation from her parents to keep them from making further decisions about her body. (Alec Baldwin provides a few welcome flashes of ironic relief as the duly arrogant lawyer she recruits from his TV commercials.)

Dysfunctional

Director Nick Cassavetes, who co-wrote the script with Jeremy Leven (nephew of Cassavetes' "The Notebook"), traces this conflict through flashbacks from various characters' perspectives, building outward from Cameron Diaz, whose priority is preserving Kate's life at all costs. Jason Patric, who's patient and supportive no matter what, only see Jesse Olson Ellingwood, who both lost in the shuffle, and Kate and Anna themselves. He probably writes a lot are heavily on voiceover from them all explaining the obvious: that they're a dysfunctional family but they still manage to stick by each other.

Cassavetes tugs at the heartstrings but ultimately refrains from demeaning any of the characters for their choices.

Cinematographer Caleb Deschanel helps bring a grassy melancholy to these heavy proceedings.

REVIEW

Too good

On the flip side, some fatally sweet-hearted scenes too good to be true—especially Brian, who happens to have chosen that exact million of careers as a firefighter, and the saintly Kate herself, who loses it for less frequently than the average person might in her situation.

Other gives a rarely-less performance as Sara, a lawyer who stopped practicing to care for Kate full time, but her anxiety too often comes out as shrillness and she doesn't quite have the position to make the courtroom scenes or the darker moments feel entirely believable. Breslin is typically bright and poised beyond her years.

But she may actually get upstaged by the lovely deadpan, especially during the scenes in which Kate recalls the thrill of her first love with a fellow cancer patient (Thomas Dekker). This provides yet another chance to get choked up, because for all the beauty and authenticity of their young romance, you know it can't last.